CATHARINE'S PROXY

MYRA SAWYER HANEY

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Catharine's Proxy

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By

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"Nan's Chicopee Children," etc.

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THIS STUDY

OF

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO MY LITTLE FRIEND

BARONESS VON B.

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Catharine's Proxy

CHAPTER I

THE AWFUL TRUTH OF IT!

"YES, I have run away from school. I truly have. I simply could n't stand it another minute. I have cried quarts this month, and I have written to papa every day, begging him to let me go home. But he is obdurate, and now I have run away. I played sick this morning, and did n't get up to breakfast, and I really did have a headache; and when Miss Montgomery came to see what was the matter, she said I was a little feverish. But when they were having the opening exercises in the school-room, and the maids were all at breakfast in the kitchen, I slipped out and down to the

station, just in time to get the 8.45 train, and here I am. Miss Mason, don't look at me in that horrified fashion; I haven't done anything so very bad. I took a carriage directly to the hotel where papa always stays; and when the proprietor recognized me, he said: 'Of course you have some lady who will come and stay with you?' I thought of you right away, for papa said, 'If you should be ill, send for Miss Mason at once;' and so I am here, and you must go down to the hotel and chaperon me at once."

Charlotte Mason and her friend Marian Hastings were bachelor maids and bread winners in the useful field of professional nursing. Together they occupied a tiny apartment well over on the west side of New York City. It was seldom that both girls were off duty together, but it happened on this morning, when Catharine Rogers brought her impertinent yet captivating little self to their door, both girls were laying plans for a holiday.

Miss Mason looked ruefully at the young girl, and shook her head disapprovingly.

"Oh, Catharine, I can't aid and abet you in running away from school."

"No, of course you can't," said Catharine. "You can just chaperon me and make my running away very respectable. What a jolly little place! Do you live here all by yourself?" she added, as Miss Mason led her into the small living room, where Marian still sat by the breakfast table.

"Oh, no; I have my dear friend Miss Hastings with me, though it is very unusual for us to be off duty together as to-day. Marian dear, this is my young patient Catharine Rogers who was so nearly killed last summer by being run away with. I have told you of her accident and my stay at their summer place?"

"If Miss Mason has told you about me, you know what a horrid thing I am, but you don't know what an angel she was all those months when my head and back were so

wobbly — I almost wish she had n't mended my head so well, then papa could n't have sent me to boarding school. But I 've run away — so come, Miss Mason, down to the hotel with me."

"I can't go, dear child, for I have an engagement at the dentist's. Why not stay here with Marian?"

"Oh, I have engaged my rooms at the hotel — we always stay there, you know; but the proprietor said it would be better for me to get some older person to stay with me. Won't you come, Miss Hastings?"

It was not the kind of a lark Marian had planned for her day off, but it had a spirit of adventure in it, so that she was not averse to accepting it as a change from her programme.

"Come, and we will go down to the Waldorf for a luncheon," said Catharine.

"I 've never been to the Waldorf," said Miss Hastings. "I 'm afraid I have nothing to wear there."

"Never mind that," said Catharine, with

the indifference of a girl who had always had plenty to wear.

"Well, I'll go," said Miss Hastings, vanishing behind the portières which separated their small bedroom from their living room, and hastily completing her street toilet, which had a decided style about it in spite of its inexpensiveness in comparison with Catharine's elegant costume.

"Be a good girl, dear, and go back to school," said Miss Mason, as she kissed the wayward child good-bye, and watched the two descend the narrow stairway to the hallway below.

"Here's my brougham," said Catharine, as they emerged from the dark hallway to the street, and found a coupé waiting.

"Oh, you have a carriage," exclaimed Miss Hastings in surprise.

"Of course. You don't suppose I am walking around New York alone?" exclaimed Miss Rogers, with a toss of her little head.

"Oh, no; I thought you were running

away," said Miss Hastings, with a sly twinkle in her eye.

"To the Waldorf," said Catharine, with the air of a young woman accustomed to being obeyed.

Marian Hastings had then a good opportunity to study the young person so unexpectedly committed to her charge. Catharine Rogers was sixteen, but short for her age, though dressed like a girl of twenty. Her hair was piled in a profuse pompadour over her forehead, her waist was exaggerated in length and slimness; but her face was lighted by a fine pair of dark eyes, though shadowed by an almost perpetual frown. There was nothing malicious or coarse about her, but even the stranger could tell that she was a spoilt child of fortune, and yet Marian Hastings was curiously drawn toward her. She had already learned from Miss Mason of the sad accident which had so nearly cost Catharine her life two years before, when, thrown from a frightened horse, she was

pitched against a jagged stone wall, and taken up for dead; of the long weeks of nursing which had brought her back to health again, not less spoiled by petting and nursing than before as the only girl of a household of brothers, and left without a mother at an early age.

Marian knew all this, knew also of the experiment of boarding school which the fond father had heroically tried as the possible antidote to home indulgence of the semi-invalid; and now the experiment had come to this.

Miss Hastings looked the young girl over with the pathological curiosity of the trained nurse. She took up the slender hand which lay ungloved on her lap.

"You have a pretty hand — good for the piano. Do you play?"

"Oh, I hate to practise. I like to play marches and coon songs, but it is an awful bore to practise. Is n't my new sapphire ring pretty? Papa gave it to me because I went to boarding school without any fuss," said

Catharine, holding the splendid jewel up to the light with the air of a connoisseur.

"Yes, it is a beauty; but will your papa take it away now?"

"Not exactly. I'd like to see him! I did n't promise to stay. I hated it from the very first, though I did think it would be fun. I thought we might see some of the boys, for there's Riverdale Academy not half a mile away, and my cousins and Dickie Lord are there. I've played with them all my life, and up there it's a mortal offence if you say good-morning to them on the street. It's not so much Miss Montgomery as it is the tutors at the academy. You would think we girls were the serpents in the Garden of Eden. Why, Dickie had to go without his supper and dig a ditch besides because he walked home from the station with me. But at our school it is one everlasting studying hour. French verbs — oh, they make me tired! and they are so unnecessary, for my Aunt Millicent can talk French as fast as English, and she learned

it all from her dressmaker in Paris. I hate school anyway, and I want to go home and have my old governess again, and stay with papa. I expect there will be an awful scene when they find out I have gone. Do you think they 'll put it in the papers? Do you suppose papa will open the 'Journal' and read:

DISAPPEARED FROM SCHOOL

SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD CATHARINE ROGERS

I don't want to distress papa. I wrote to him on the train, but he can't get my letter until to-night. Will Miss Montgomery telegraph? Oh, dear, what a flurry about nothing, when here I am going along like any proper person shut up in a brougham with a chaperon. We ought at least to have taken an automobile. Here we are at the Waldorf."

Catharine shook out her silk-lined skirts with a luxurious swish, and, dismissing her carriage, led the way into the Waldorf lunchroom with the air of a full-fledged young lady

of fashion, Miss Hastings following demurely after, yet satirically conscious of the amusing features of the situation.

"Broiled live lobster and champagne," said Catharine, running her eye sophistically over the menu, but having the grace to look to Miss Hastings for approval.

"I think we won't order champagne, dear," said her chaperon; "and chicken soufflé is more digestible than the lobster, don't you think so?"

"Just as you like. I don't care for champagne myself, but it sounds like a good time, the boys say. Let 's have chicken soufflé and salad and frozen pudding and black coffee; that 's all right. Is n't it proper enough?"

"Quite proper enough and very good, only I would n't spoil my good skin with too much coffee."

"It must be horrid to know just what effect things you eat are going to have on your digestion. I began to study physiology up there, and it made me squirm to be turned

inside out so. Some of the girls just gloat over it. It makes me think of angle-worms and slimy things — there, it will just spoil my lunch! Let's talk of nice things. Do you see that girl over there in that blue hat? I think I'd like a hat like that. Only her eyes are blue. Girls with blue eyes take to blue hats. You'd look nice in a hat like that. Why don't you get one?"

"Because it would take about all I could earn in one week to begin with, and then it would n't be quite suitable for my purposes."

"Oh, dear, do you have to earn your hats? Well, I would go without them like the peasant girls in Europe."

"But then, you see I'm not exactly a peasant," Marian said laughingly, "though I do work for my living."

"Oh, I did n't mean that. I think it would be quite nice to go without a hat — far nicer than to earn it. Have some salad?" For, chatting on, they had nearly eaten their luncheon, and were soon walking down Fifth

Avenue to the smaller hotel, where Catharine was well known as the daughter of a wealthy New England banker. Although Catharine took possession of the suite of rooms often occupied by her father's family, with great dignity, as soon as the door was closed on the attendant, she threw herself upon the lounge and gave way to all the pent-up feelings of the last few hours.

"Oh, do you suppose papa will be very angry? When do you think he will come?"

"If you wrote to him this morning, he cannot get the letter until to-night. But if Miss Montgomery has telegraphed to him, he may have started for New York already. I think I will telegraph to Miss Montgomery myself, as that will prevent any alarming news, and your father will know where to find you, if he does not get your letter. You see how much trouble you are giving to everybody, Catharine. The only thing for you to do is to be sensible now and face the music. It was very foolish of you to run

away. But now that you have done it, unless you are willing to go back, you must suffer the consequences."

"I won't go back, and there is Dickie — he is going to meet me here at two o'clock, and I look like a fright," said the young girl, jumping up as impetuously as she had thrown herself down; and, rushing to a looking-glass, she surveyed the tumbled hair and hat.

"You don't mean to say you have made an appointment with a young man to meet you here!" exclaimed Miss Hastings, feeling that she had more difficulties to meet than she had apprehended.

"Just Dickie, that's all. He is as homesick as I am, and hates his old school as much as I do. Why, I've known Dickie all my life."

Nevertheless, Miss Hastings found herself appalled by the situation, and conjured up a vision of a wicked and worldly young man who had designs upon the fortune of the wilful young heiress, when the bell-boy announced:

"A young gentleman to see Miss Rogers in the ladies' parlor."

"Oh, it's Dickie. I'll go right down," exclaimed Catharine, clapping her hands like a delighted child. Miss Hastings stiffened her good-natured features to an expression of unwonted dignity, and barred the door.

"I will go down and explain to Mr. Lord."

"All right," said Catharine; "then bring him right up here, and I'll be making myself more presentable."

Marian had not been quite prepared for this turn of affairs, having expected a scene with Catharine, and with some mental reservations she made her way to the ladies' parlor, whose solitary occupant — a short, cherubic-looking boy of sixteen — left no doubt as to the reality of Dickie Lord.

Marian's first impulse was to laugh at the evaporation of her villainous image, but a second glance at Dickie Lord informed her that this young gentleman took himself very seriously. He gave one glance at her unpre-

tentious street costume and not a second to her fresh, bright face, but walked to the window and looked out at the gay throng passing by, without a suspicion that the young person was going to address him, as she did, however.

"You are Mr. Richard Lord, I suppose. I am Miss Hastings, who is chaperoning Miss Rogers until her father comes. If you would like to see her you can come up into our parlor, but she cannot go out with you unless I go."

Dickie Lord was a very little embarrassed, "phased" he said inwardly, and began to laugh like a very hysterical school-girl. As Miss Hastings was leading the way to the elevator, he followed, without finding a word to say for himself, until at their own door Catharine pounced upon him with:

"Oh, Dickie, you've come! Did you hear anything at Riverdale? Were they looking for me?"

"I don't know," said Dickie. "I just cut, myself."

"Did n't you get permission to come to New York?"

"Oh, yes; I said I had to go to the dentist's."

"Well, now what let's do? It is n't half so much fun to run away as I thought it was going to be. Can't we go to the opera?"

Dickie's round face lengthened and his dimples seemed miraculously to become wrinkles of care. He patted his dear little fat hands lovingly, and then said confidingly to Catharine:

"To tell the truth, Kit, I have n't got but one dollar — they cut me off on my allowance because I would n't play football last Saturday — and I don't see how we can go to the opera, for I 've got to get something to eat and buy my ticket back to Riverdale. If I had any money I believe I'd run away too. It is such a beastly hole up there, and I have to study with tutors following me all around all the time."

"Well there, are n't we going to do any-

thing? You go down and get your lunch, Dickie, I 'll lend you two dollars; and then we will go to — what can we do but go to walk in the park? We can do that anyway."

"Yes," said Miss Hastings, "that is the very best thing to do; it will give you fresh air and exercise, and you will both feel more reasonable after it."

Dickie Lord, left to his solitary luncheon, had also time to reflect, but reflection was not nearly so pleasant to Dickie as refection; and with his finances swelled by the loan of two dollars from Catharine, he felt justified in ordering a luncheon which, in comparison with the school table, seemed a very elaborate menu. Dickie was very good-natured, lazy, and slow; and, revelling in the good things below, he had forgotten that Catharine was upstairs waiting for him. He had forgotten the vigilant tutors of Riverdale. He was lost to all sense except the sense of taste, when Catharine, bristling with rage and excitement, appeared on the opposite side of the table, on which his greedy

young eyes had looked lovingly for nearly an hour.

"Dickie, you gluttonous boy, you selfish gourmand, it is after three o'clock, and I'm tired of waiting for you," exclaimed the irate Catharine.

"After three o'clock!" cried Dickie. "Why, I must take the 4.10 train back to Riverdale, or I'll be expelled as sure as I live."

"Then do go back. Don't get expelled — it would be too disgraceful. But what can we do? We haven't done a thing. I believe I'll go back on the 4.10 train myself."

In spite of Miss Hastings, Catharine felt the awfulness of going back to Riverdale with Dickie; and although to the throng of suburban residents going up the Hudson on the 4.10 the brown-eyed little maiden and the blue-eyed lad were only a pair of well-dressed and well-groomed chubby children, going home from a day in town, the young truants themselves thought every eye was upon them and every finger pointed in scorn at them. Dickie saw

in every man a tutor spy, and Catharine in every woman a pursuing teacher. Yet in truth there was not one person who knew them in that Argus-eyed multitude until the train drew up at Riverdale, and tremblingly they descended to the platform. The Riverdale passengers were few on the 4.10 train that afternoon, for besides our three young people but a single gray-bearded gentleman descended to the platform.

"Catharine, Dickie, what does this mean?" said their fellow passenger.

"Papa, papa," cried Catharine, "we're going back to school. Don't be very angry. You aren't very angry, are you? Dickie came down to lunch with me, and here is Miss Hastings, a friend of Miss Mason's; she has been with us all the time. I was going to run away, but now I am going back to apologize to Miss Montgomery; and if you'll let me come home pretty soon, I won't run away again. You'll forgive me, won't you?"

"And is Dickie running away too, or did he only go down for a luncheon?" said Mr. Rogers, whose sternness soon melted under the cajolement of his favorite child.

"Oh, I go to New York once in a while to see the dentist, and Catharine sent me word to come to the hotel to see her."

"Why Catharine, I am astonished!" said Mr. Rogers.

"Well, papa dear, I did n't know what else to do. We always go to the —— Hotel, and I wrote you all about it, and I went for Miss Mason. I wanted Dickie to take me to the opera, but he did n't have enough money, and I only had twenty-five dollars, and I did n't like to spend all that, because how did I know but that you would disinherit me, and I might have to do something dreadful — be a shop girl or a typewriter girl or something?"

"Oh, no, my dear, you could n't do that, for you can't add nor spell. I fear I shall have to continue to supply the money until you are better able to take care of yourself than

you are now; but to prevent such escapades as this, I shall have to make your allowance smaller, I fear. And now for poor Miss Montgomery. My child, you don't know what anxiety you have caused. Why Dickie, what is the matter with you?"

"Gee Whitaker! there 's the monitor — good-bye." Dickie rolled, waddled, and paddled off at a rate of speed most uncommon for him, but not fast enough to take him entirely out of sight of the vigilant monitor. Dickie was short and fat, the monitor was tall and thin; and although Dickie could roll laterally almost as fast as he could progressively, the tutor wasted no time in going from side to side, and, keeping on a straight line, soon overtook the running boy, whom he seized by the collar in an urgent fashion, not at all agreeable to Dickie, who felt every moment as though he was going to be choked to death.

"Where have you been?" said the tutor.

"I 've been to New York. I had permission to go to the dentist's."

"Well, you don't go to the dentist's with a young lady."

"I did n't say I did," said Dickie.

"Well, I 'll report you," said the tutor.

"Report me for nothing?" said Dickie. "Who said I 'd been to the dentist's with a young lady?"

"I 'll report you for impudence."

"You 're a mean sneak," said Dickie, jerking himself out of the clutches of the monitor and walking on with offended dignity and a guilty conscience.

"Such a mess — and not a bit of fun after all. I 'll be glad when I get into college," he soliloquized. "Thank goodness I had that lunch, for I shall have to go to bed without any supper, I suppose."

CHAPTER II

THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

IT had been a long, anxious day for Miss Montgomery since the discovery was made that Catharine had run away. She had left no stone unturned to keep the fact from the school; and, although many had surmised it, not a girl actually knew that the teachers had no idea of her whereabouts, nor why she had stolen off so mysteriously. The teachers made no comment on her absence from the classes, and only the ominous yellow-enveloped messages which came and went gave a hint of more than usual excitement.

"You may all go to basket ball" was said with a sigh of relief by Miss Montgomery, who, as the eighteen girls of the house poured out of doors, turned to her assistant with a desperate note in her voice. "Catharine

Rogers' father will reach here by the 4.10 train. What can I say to him?"

"Show him the telegram from Miss Mason. That will show that the child is all right."

"But how can I explain it? He will think that we have been severe with the child, whereas I have never had a girl to whom I have tried to be so lenient. She hates study and discipline, hours and system. Literature means nothing to her, and mathematics are worse than Sanscrit. Yet the father, how can I make him see it? Catharine is lovable and attractive, if I had no responsibility of her. Margaret, what shall I say to Mr. Rogers?"

"Don't take it so seriously, dear friend. It is nothing but a girlish prank. Girls are always doing such things. You have been fortunate so far in having girls who have a love for study and a high sense of honor, and this one is no disgrace to you or the school. Mr. Rogers knows that Catharine has been homesick, for she has written of nothing else since she came. It is not

that she dislikes us so much as that she wants to be at home, and to go without restraints."

Helen Montgomery and Margaret Graham had been college friends, having belonged to that fortunate generation of college women who regarded the college education as a privilege and not a stigma, and who went through their college life with the ever-increasing sense of its delights and benefits. Not forced by necessity to be bread-winners, they had chosen to build up a girls' school on ideals of their own — a school which should have all the inspiration of their college ideals, yet have all the privacy and refinement of the home, with the breadth and culture which the higher education had given to them. They were both young and enthusiastic, near enough to girlhood to understand their girls, yet wise enough to see beyond their youth to the possibilities of their womanhood. Both of them possessed two potent factors for influence with

girls — beauty and tact. Helen Montgomery had that queenly beauty of figure and face that had won for her at college the title of "Duchess," and her very command of presence made it unquestionable that she, and not little Miss Graham, should be the principal of Riverdale School. But Margaret Graham, all cleverness and brightness, a very ferret of intellectuality, diving into the very core of history or philosophy with astuteness, no one would suspect of being anything but a frothy young débutant, with her bright hair that would curl provokingly about brow and neck, and the dimples in her cheeks, and the childishly frank blue eyes. "Shadow and Sunshine" the girls called the two teachers; Miss Montgomery with her serious Athene brows, Miss Graham with her Aphrodite lips. It was Miss Graham who refused to regard the disappearance of Catharine tragically, and Miss Montgomery who saw in it the falling of a cherished ideal. But a cheer from the girls at basket ball drew them both to the

window, and there, in the midst of the players, stood Catharine Rogers, introducing first one and then another schoolmate to her father.

Miss Graham looked at Miss Montgomery with mirth in her blue eyes, which could but coax a smile from even the serious principal.

"Oh, you optimist, Margaret! How I wish I could see with your eyes," said Miss Montgomery, laying her large white hand on the small, dimpled one of her laughing friend. "Now to give orders to the kitchen for dinner for Mr. Rogers," said Miss Montgomery.

"Oh, the dinner is all right. Catharine does n't complain of the table. That is one thing which suits her ladyship. Here comes the stern and irate parent; if your heart fails you, I will stay and support you, Helen," said the small assistant, with her hand on the door, as the servant announced the visitors.

"Oh, you will have to now, Margaret, if you can compose yourself."

There was indeed nothing alarming about Mr. Rogers. He was very apologetic himself,

yet withal very much relieved to find things no worse than they proved.

"Catharine has gone to her room, Miss Montgomery, in a very contrite spirit. It won't do her any harm to have a little cry, and to go without her dinner. It was a naughty, wilful thing for her to do, and has given us a great deal of trouble. I had an important business engagement to-day. But she has promised me that she will stay until Thanksgiving at any rate."

"We have tried to make her contented, Mr. Rogers. Perhaps she would be happier at some other school. There are other schools where there are things to her taste," said the senior teacher.

"Most schools are educational, dear Miss Montgomery, and what Catharine objects to is education. She has objected to education ever since, by persuasion and bribes, she learned to read. She is constitutionally opposed to education, and I am inclined to think we will have to give it up. She will pick up some

sort of culture and knowledge from travel and society, I suppose, and the domestic virtues can be developed; but of education so called, Catharine will have none. Yet she is not a bad sort of a child either, Miss Montgomery. I am free to confess that I miss her at home sadly. She fills the house with life. Now, my dear young ladies — Miss Graham is your partner in this excellent institution, I believe?"

Both teachers bowed, and Mr. Rogers continued: "Catharine's tuition is pledged to you for this year, and I don't want you to lose anything by her defection."

"I beg that you will not think of that," Miss Montgomery exclaimed, with some hauteur.

"Well, if you are not willing to have it left in that way, why not give the education to some girl who does want it? There must be some girl who cannot afford to pay one thousand dollars a year who would be glad to take Catharine's place here. Let us find a

proxy for Catharine, and give her this education which my little girl so willingly throws away."

Both teachers gasped with the munificence of this offer, and both thought of a dozen girls who would willingly step into Catharine's shoes.

"But, Mr. Rogers, you must know some one whom you would like to send in Catharine's place?"

"Strange to say, I don't. All my friends can afford to pay for the education of their girls, and boys too, and the young fry are throwing their advantages to the winds. There 's young Dickie Lord — my neighbor's son — cares no more for study than a Hottentot. It comes too easy. If they had to work for it, perhaps they would prize it. No, you shall choose the proxy, Miss Graham," said Mr. Rogers, looking at the pretty little teacher, whose eyes were shining with delight at this idea.

"Why not let Catharine choose her own

proxy, and take some personal interest in what she does?"

"Happy thought, Miss Graham. I will leave you to educate Catharine up to the importance of a wise selection of a proxy. A train goes at 6.40, I believe, ladies, and I left Miss Hastings, who came from New York with Catharine, at the station. If you will excuse me I will say good-bye to Catharine, and catch the 6.40 train. Good-evening. See well to the proxy, Miss Graham. Forgive the little girl, Miss Montgomery. Good-evening."

It was Miss Graham who stole up to Catharine's room, and found the repentant girl in tears on her small white bed, and Miss Graham's soft little hand in some way found Catharine's in the dark.

"Such a delightful plan your papa has for you, Catharine dear." Not a word about running away. "You are to go home at Thanksgiving, and you are to find some girl who wants to go away to school as much as

you want to go home, and she is to come here in your place. Now do you think you can stay here for four weeks longer with that in mind? And meantime think of all the girls you know. Isn't there one who wants to come to school?"

"Is that all true, dear Miss Graham?" exclaimed Catharine wildly.

"Yes, dear, every bit."

"Then I'll stand it; but that other girl, — would that be the golden rule, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you'? It would n't be doing a friend any kindness to give her what I don't want myself."

"But don't you see, dear Catharine, that it is the very principle of the golden rule to do unto others as they would be done by? If you give a friend a thing which you like and which she does not, that is not the spirit of the golden rule. Because you do not want an education does not depreciate the value of the education to some one else. You will be

surprised to find how many girls of your age there are who are working, longing, even praying, for a chance to go away to school, — girls who have got to earn their living or girls who love books better than anything else, or girls in homes where there is no time for study."

"I don't know any girls like that, Miss Graham. Where can I find one?"

"If you don't know any, I shall have to find one for you, Catharine, for I have promised your papa that between now and Thanksgiving we shall have found that proxy. So you will help me, won't you?"

"Of course I will, dear Miss Graham, if there is a girl living who is so wise as that."

"Plenty of them, dear. Now let me brush out your hair, and then I will have one of the maids bring you up some cocoa and toast, and after a good sleep we will be ready for lessons to-morrow, and to-morrow is an easy day for your class."

"What makes you so good to me, dear Miss Graham? I have been a horrid, bad girl. I meant to run away from school and never come back, and if it had n't been for Dickie I would. But *you* make me more ashamed than ever. Do the girls know?"

"No, not one of them knows, dear, and Miss Montgomery and I feel very sorry that you have been so unhappy. You can make up now by being happy until the proxy takes her turn. Good-night."

CHAPTER III

THE PROXY

"SHE must please Catharine, and she must be suited to our school, and yet she must be a girl who cannot have any other chance. Very well, I shall not vote to encourage any girl to go away from home just for a whim. But there are the poor girls in New York; we could find dozens of them, but they would not suit Catharine," said Miss Graham. "I would not believe it could be so difficult to find a proxy for an education."

But meantime Catharine's own little brain was busy conjuring the great problem, for it had come to mean a great deal to Catharine. The idea had completely possessed her, and day and night she had lived with her proxy in the abstract; and one night, very late — it seemed to Catharine that it must be almost

morning, for she had been thinking so long in the dark — it came to her, and, jumping out of her own bed, she slipped into her dressing gown and slippers, popped out of her room, and, peering into the long corridor, caught a glimmer of light under Miss Graham's door. With a bound she sped past all the closed doors of rooms where her mates lay fast asleep, and tapped impatiently upon Miss Graham's door, and not even waiting for it to be opened, caught at the low surprised "Come in."

The little teacher sat by her lamp correcting piles of test papers, her lovely hair tossed in disorder, and a worried, tired look on her sweet face.

"Catharine, are you ill, dear?"

"Not a bit, dear Miss Graham, but I've thought of a proxy, and she is so splendid I could not wait until morning; so when I saw the light I could n't help coming to tell you. But do you have to sit up every night like this to correct our old papers?"

"Not always, dear, but to-night some of the girls needed a chaperon at the concert, and I had to leave my work until afterwards."

"And some of my papers are so horrid! Don't bother with them, just put them in the fire."

"No, dear, that would n't be doing my duty. Besides, they are all done now. I was just thinking of going to bed. How would you like to share my big bed to-night, and tell me all about the proxy — after I have undressed?"

"Oh, what fun! But won't I disturb you?" said Catharine, with a spasm of unselfishness.

"Not for one night, and I am as anxious as you to know all about this splendid proxy."

"But let me brush out your hair for you, as you did for me the night I ran away. Oh, dear, if it was n't for studying, I should never want to leave you, dear Miss Graham; but Rosalie Courtenay would study, and she would be a credit to you and Miss Montgomery."

"And is her name Rosalie Courtenay? What a pretty name."

"Not half so pretty as Rosalie herself; and to think she lives in a cart — just like Mrs. Jarley's wax works."

"Lives in a cart? Why Catharine, what can you mean?"

"Well, I 'll tell you all about it. You know we go to Maine every summer. Papa bought the finest old house up there in the prettiest place you ever saw. They call it Grandmothers' Hill, for there used to be so many grandmothers there, live ones and dead ones. I know one girl who has four live ones and graves of ever so many dead ones. All the young people go away from the place because there is n't any business there, but somebody told papa about it, and he and several of his friends have bought the big old houses and fixed them all up, and we take our horses down there and we have the loveliest summers. I can see Mt. Washington from my window, and little hills all about. It is the sweetest place you ever saw. Just the place for an artist to paint beautiful pictures in, but somehow no

artists discovered Grandmothers' Hill till last summer, for it is four miles from the railroad. But this artist came in a wagon — just like a lunch cart that you see driving about New York. They came one awfully hot day in July. I was lying in a hammock under the trees, playing with my dog Punch, when the cart stopped right at our gate. I thought surely it was a circus, but I did n't see any other carts, and did n't hear any wild animals growl, so I kept still and waited developments. Then right out from the back of the wagon jumped the prettiest girl you ever saw. I really believe she is as pretty as you are, Miss Graham."

"I hope so," said Miss Graham, interested and wide awake in spite of her vigil.

"She had the most fascinating auburn hair and eyes to match and skin like rose leaves, and a sun-bonnet tied under her chin. She had a short brown skirt on and a shirt waist. She jumped out of the wagon, and ran up to me so gracefully — oh, I wish I could tell you

how graceful Rosalie is! Half-way down the path she made a funny little courtesy, like a German girl, and said:

"'Pardon, mademoiselle, may my father, Legendre Courtenay, place his easel before your estate? He desires to take a view of the mountains.'

"I tumbled out of my hammock, and felt as clumsy as a great overgrown boy, though I had on much prettier clothes than she, for my white duck skirt was quite pretty and stylish; but she looked like a picture, and spoke like a great French lady. Somehow I managed to say, 'Oh, yes, I am sure papa will be pleased to have an artist paint any view of our place. We think it quite pretty.'

"She tripped back like a girl in comic opera, and called, 'Papa descends — c'est permis;' and then she proceeded to pull out of the wagon a chair and an umbrella, and soon a tall, handsome man came with canvas and paints and an easel, and pitched the whole on our lawn.

"Papa was taking a nap, and my brothers had gone to a picnic — you know I have n't any mother — so I did n't know what to do, but I just stood there and gaped like an awkward boy. When he had pitched his things, Mr. Artist Courtenay made me a low bow, and said, in perfectly good English — much better than Rosalie's:

"'We intend to stay here some weeks, so that we would like to find a place for our house on wheels for the nights. Where can we find the town authorities? They may object to our little ménage, which is a very convenient way of seeing the country and choosing a view.'

"'Well, there are n't many men in this town,' I said. 'Most of the places are owned by grandmothers. There is old Mr. Hartley, but he is deaf and blind; and there is the postmaster at the store. I think you had better see my father. He lives here in summer. He is taking a nap now.'

"'Well, I beg that you will not awake him.'

"But Punch and the other dogs had been barking around the funny old concern so that papa and the servants came out to see what was the matter. Papa thought it was a travelling show, and was going to order them all off the place, when Mr. Courtenay stepped up with the airs of a lord and introduced himself. 'I am Legendre Courtenay, of New Orleans and Paris, and have come to your country in search of sketches for my canvas. I beg you will allow me to get the view of the hills overshadowing your pretty place?'

"Papa recognized him as a gentleman, and in fact had seen some of his pictures in exhibitions, so that he was very glad to have him take any sketches that he liked about our place; and the old cart, driven by a boy, was wheeled off down the road in a shady place, quite out of sight of the village, so that nobody was annoyed by it. And there they lived four weeks. Miss Graham, you ought to have seen that wagon, with a whole house inside of it, from a cooking stove to a mirror.

There were two bunks for Rosalie and her father, and boxes of clothes and pantry things, and dishes and books, and lockers for food, and every contrivance you could imagine. There that girl lived, doing all the housekeeping, though the boy who drove did most of the rough work; but Rosalie kept everything nice and comfortable, and mended their clothes, and studied lessons every day, Latin and French and German, with her father, just like a boy. Her mother was a New Orleans woman, and she was born in New Orleans, but had lived most of her life abroad, roaming about all over Europe ever since her mother died, with her father and an old French nurse, who was too old now to travel much, and only stays with them when they are in one place in the winter. Mr. Courtenay has a lot of pictures to sell, and he is going to be in New York and Boston all this year, and whenever he can afford it Rosalie says he is going to send her to school. But he is so unpractical, papa said he did not believe he

ever kept a dollar. When he has a lot of money he takes Rosalie to theatres, and they live at swell hotels, and when they are poor they live in the cart; and Rosalie is anxious for an education. Why did n't I think of her before? If I only had time to tell you what she is like! But you will know soon enough, for Saturday we will go to New York and hunt her up, you and I. Now you must go to sleep and so must I. Good-night."

CHAPTER IV

ROSALIE COURTENAY

IT was a beautiful November day when at last Catharine and Miss Graham set out in quest of their proxy. The autumn sunlight danced brightly on the Jersey hills, and the New York express shot swiftly along the beautiful banks of the lovely Hudson; and Catharine, who little loved books, dearly loved nature, watched each varying landscape with quiet pleasure, the sunlight on the river and hills, the curling smoke of many boats, the towers and domes of the great city distantly outlined against the sky, at last looming and shadowing into nearness. But leaving the panorama as the train drew into the station, Catharine was suddenly brought to a recollection of her last visit, and she stole a shy glance

at her teacher, finding there, however, nothing but eager interest in the present and a curious impatience to pursue their quest, as she studied the address Catharine had given her.

"Van Dyke Studios, Fifty-third Street."

"They must be the studios over the stables," said Miss Graham, as they hailed a Broadway car.

"Over stables!" exclaimed Catharine, in dismay. "Of course Rosalie must be living in some extraordinary place, but I never thought it could be as bad as that. There must be some mistake, Miss Graham."

"It is n't half as bad as it sounds, dear," answered her guide. "Some of the best artists in the city live over stables, especially when they are built in low, long rooms together, so that the light is not cut off by high adjoining buildings. You will see they are very desirable for artists."

"I should think it would be a very good place to paint madonnas," said Catharine demurely.

"Why madonnas? I doubt if there are any artists who paint madonnas in these studios," Miss Graham said in a puzzled way.

"Such a fine place to study mangers," said Catharine, laughing.

"Fifty-third Street," called the conductor, and they left the car and looked about them at Upper Broadway, with its tall buildings converging in the vista of Central Park beyond; and, turning eastward, they had no difficulty in finding the low red brick lines of English built stables, their broad oaken doors opened or closed to the neatly flagged and immaculately clean pavement. Here and there Catharine, a passionate lover of horses and at home a frequenter of the stables, could see the handsome stud of the millionnaire owner; and the splendid equipments and equipages made her for the time entirely forgetful of the object of their visit to the Van Dyke stables.

"Oh, I must go in; may I, Miss Graham?" she exclaimed, as through an open door she caught the friendly glance of a groom just

saddling a beautiful bay horse with a lady's saddle.

"I don't know that we ought to, Catharine. It is n't just the thing, you know, but we 'll ask the groom if we may."

"It is n't just according to rules, ma'am," said the groom, "but since the young lady is knowing to horses, and I 've a few minutes to spare before my own young lady's horse must be round, I don't mind showing her the place and the creatures. We 've only a few that 's in use, ma'am, here; it 's no place for these fine fellows to be shut up in, and we swaps 'em off every other week with the horses up at the country place. We 've but six here now — two carriage pair and two saddle horses, one for my young lady and whoever rides with her. Sometimes it 's me has the honor. This is her favorite horse what goes to the horse show every year, and here, ma'am, is her stall. These yere chains to the halter is sterling silver, ma'am, and this yere is her own towel marked with her own name, and her own

bucket to drink out of, with the letters all carved on it so. She ain't no common beast, and she must have the very best o' quarters and the very best o' care. You never heard on a horse having a toothbrush now, did you? Well, this one has — a big silver-mounted one; and every day my young lady says, 'Jeames, has Beauty had her teeth brushed?' 'Yes,' says I, 'she has, miss, just as regular as her hair's brushed and her stall's scrubbed.'

"Oh, miss, some day when you come again I'll show you the whole place. The painter fellows upstairs don't keep their apartments half as clean as we do ours down here. We has to, folks is so particular about the critters nowadays. Automobiles ain't made no difference. Horses is friends, and folks know it. I heard a fellow say one day to my master, 'Horses look about alike to me so long as they ain't balky and 'll go.' You orter see my master. Says he, 'Horses is as different as men. I could tell every horse I ever owned, if I'd sold them twenty years

ago. There 's always a look about a horse — it ain't always in his eye, maybe it 's more in his hind left foot — but that makes him look different to other horses if you 've got any horse sense at all.' Now you 've got horse sense sure, miss; I can tell by the way you look at the beasts."

"I love my horses better than most people," said Catharine, "but they have n't any toothbrushes."

"Nor don't need 'em," said the groom. "Good-day" — and he led out the bay horse, as Catharine and Miss Graham mounted a narrow stairway which led to the Van Dyke Studios. There they found closed upon a corridor each door bearing the card of some artist more or less well known. Passing several, they came at last to one upon which was written:

LEGENDRE COURTENAY
PARIS, FRANCE.

"Enter!" called a half-foreign voice from within; and obeying, the girls opened the door

and found themselves in the presence of the artist himself, a tall, handsome man, who was not to be disfigured by even a grotesque and shabby working costume, made up of a pair of Turkish trousers, an Egyptian fez, and an old smoking jacket. He was at work upon a large canvas, in the foreground of which was a young girl in the peasant costume of Switzerland; the original of which was sitting patiently knitting on a three-legged stool.

"Catharine, Mignonne!" exclaimed the model.

"Mademoiselle Rogers!" cried the artist; "what a surprise. How happy we are to see you — and your young friend."

"My teacher, Miss Graham."

Rosalie courtesyed in the grave fashion which seemed to suit her picturesque costume, then turned to her papa to explain her odd dress.

"Rosalie has been posing for me, young ladies. I had a little foreign view which needed a figure, so Rosalie has had to don

her peasant rig. It is hardly the fashion of New York, but Rosalie likes to dress up in it. And what does it matter? We are just here with old Susanne."

"Rosalie is so sweet in it I should like a picture of her myself," said Catharine. "But Mr. Courtenay, we want to take Rosalie away. Can you spare her this winter?"

"That depends," said the papa somewhat dubiously, looking from one to the other.

"Well, I shall have to explain," said Catharine, looking about for a chair, and finding nothing but cushions and a divan.

"Seat yourselves, ladies, and Rosalie, tell Susanne to bring some coffee."

"Oh, no matter about coffee, dear Rosalie. We are going to lunch soon, and I must have you here to hear about it." So in spite of Mr. Courtenay, Catharine drew Rosalie down beside her, and proceeded to develop her plan.

"You see how it is, Mr. Courtenay. I am a dunce — I don't like to study. Now papa

found the loveliest school in the world for me, and where I ought to have been glad to study, and I would n't, and I did an awful thing. I ran away, and then papa said he should send another girl in my place, and I thought of you, dear Rosalie. I want you to go to this school in my place, and you will like it, for you want to read English books and know American ways, and it is only a little way from New York. You will let her, won't you, Mr. Courtenay?"

Rosalie had been brought up in the old world way, and looked at her papa before she dared say she would like above all things to go; but papa was looking at Miss Graham, and he said:

"You run into the back studio, little girls, while I talk to Mademoiselle Graham."

And with a feeling that half the battle was won, the girls ran off, hand in hand, a striking contrast in costume and character.

"What a queer place! This is funnier than the cart, Rosalie. How can you manage to

live in such queer places?" Catharine asked, surveying the strange rooms, which seemed built after the manner of a photographer's studio, with windows entering in the roof, the light cut off here and there by devices of pulley shades or draperies.

"Why, we think this is so grand," said Rosalie. "We have much better rooms than in our studio at Paris. One never expects much room in the city. It is only in the country that we have many rooms and windows. Is the school in the country, ma chère?"

"Oh, yes; there we have windows, and gardens, and tennis courts, and golf if you like it, and such nice rooms to sleep in. I shall leave you all my things, my sofa pillows and my pictures, for I have plenty at home."

"And shall I sleep in a white bed?"

"Why, of course, Rosalie. Is it so remarkable to sleep in a white bed?"

Rosalie put her two hands together most ecstatically, as she exclaimed:

"It is not always convenient to have a white bed in the studios, you know. We sleep on divans like this," said Rosalie, lifting the cover of the couch upon which they were sitting, and displaying a deep box in which were a great many articles of household use.

"Oh, you will have a white bed and a dressing-table."

"With a looking-glass?" asked Rosalie.

"A dressing-table without a looking-glass would be queer enough."

"Well, we never had a looking-glass at the convent, nor at the school in Germany."

"You poor dear! They did not mean to let you know how pretty you are, for fear you might be vain," exclaimed Catharine, throwing her arms about her friend enthusiastically.

"Oh, beauty is only a snare," said Rosalie.

"What a dear little goose you are, Rosalie. You will learn lots of things at Riverdale."

"If I may go."

"Trust Miss Graham to convince your

papa. She can talk French and Latin, and do awful problems in mathematics, and play Beethoven and Chopin, and dance the German, and play golf, and you will love her to distraction; but you must write me letters every week about school."

"But perhaps I will not be allowed to go."

"Yes, you will, too. Let us go and find out now."

"But papa has not called us yet."

"I shall go myself, then," said Catharine, untroubled by Rosalie's extreme propriety. "Mr. Courtenay, Rosalie is to go, is she not?" she cried, rushing into the studio, where, to her utter disgust, she found Mr. Courtenay had long ago dismissed the subject, and was now pointing out to Miss Graham the beauties of some of his recent sketches.

"Oh, yes; Rosalie is to go on Monday," said Miss Graham. "Her papa will bring her up in the morning."

"And can she not go out with us now to luncheon and to the matinée?"

"I think not to-day, Miss Catharine. I must finish my sketch of her, if she is to leave me."

Somewhat consoled by the prospect of having Rosalie at Riverdale before she should leave, Catharine said good-bye.

When at last Rosalie Courtenay was expected at Riverdale, the girls gathered in the library, and Hilda Huntingdon received the first impression as Catharine's proxy entered the hall, an impression which caused her to ejaculate:

"Oh, girls, she has come, and she looks like a girl in a picture frame, for all the world a princess in a riding-habit, a green velvet dress, and a picture hat!"

But Hilda's rapid impressions were pale in comparison with those which were received by the seventeen other girls when Rosalie was ushered at length into the library.

A lovely vision was little Rosalie, in this dark green velvet costume, which her father, in a moment of lavish expenditure, had bought

for her, forgetting, in his æsthetic delight at the effect, that it was unsuitable to the schoolgirl of sixteen, or that the child could have had a whole much-needed outfit of suitable garments which she must now go without for the price of this one very picturesque costume. Rosalie herself knew that she was not dressed for an appearance at school; but so long as papa was pleased, she could bear the critical glances of eighteen pairs of eyes, not conscious that there was quite as much admiration as censure in these same glances.

Catharine, with a certain sense of sponsorship, placed herself at once beside her, and, while Miss Montgomery made the introductions, nodded to each girl in a manner which would seem to say:

"Make it hard for her and you will have to deal with me."

Few of the girls did more than bow, somewhat embarrassed by Rosalie's funny little courtesy; but several extended their hands in

good fellowship, and one large-eyed, broad-browed blonde girl said:

"We hope you will like us, Rosalie; your room is next to mine. Dorothy Sutton is my name."

"Thank you so much," said Rosalie, her brown eyes filling with tears, which had not come during the formal ordeal.

As a fact Dorothy Sutton had never liked Catharine Rogers, and she had been prepared to dislike her proxy; but Dorothy always championed the oppressed, and she had soon noted that Rosalie Courtenay was out of her element.

But this ordeal was a very brief one, for Miss Graham soon carried Rosalie off to her room to unpack her trunk, which was a very small one indeed, containing the few very simple dresses which Rosalie had preserved from her brief school experiences in the cold latitudes of Germany. They were in remarkable contrast to the green velvet, consisting of two perfectly plain brown cashmeres, a black

serge, and a blue serge; no bright waists, nor profusion of ribbons. When Catharine's proxy appeared in the class-room after luncheon, she wore a tight-fitting brown cashmere, partially covered by a black alpaca apron. If there had been astonishment at the gorgeousness of her splendid costume before, there was amazement at the nun-like simplicity of her later appearance. An involuntary gasp sprang from each girl.

"It is Saint Rosalie now," said Hilda Huntingdon, nudging her next neighbor. Dorothy Sutton's dark blue eyes flashed fire. "It's the way they dress at school in France," she whispered, frowning down the stares which greeted the girl.

"May Rosalie take half my desk now, Miss Montgomery? You know no one has used it since Frances went home so ill. She will hardly be back before Christmas."

"Certainly, Dorothy; that will be a good seat for Rosalie. You may show her what we are reading in French translation."

Slipping into the empty seat by Dorothy, Rosalie cast a loving glance at the familiar pages of "Sans Famille," thankful to be called to no more foreign task in this dread first hour.

By an accident the recitation to-day had fallen to Miss Montgomery instead of the native teacher, and the girls, some with facility but more with faltering, read their allotted paragraphs.

"Perhaps Rosalie will help us out to-day," said Miss Montgomery, as they came to a long and appalling paragraph. Rosalie read the long page with that unmistakable accent and inflection that betrays at once the foreigner, and in this case revealed intelligence and accomplishment, which gave pleasure to the whole class. Again they forgot the odd costume, and again Rosalie Courtenay achieved an unconscious triumph.

CHAPTER V

THE ORDER OF BEAUTY AND FASHION

THERE was a meeting in the "Growlery," which was Hilda Huntingdon's room. Six of the middle juniors held counsel, but Hilda swayed the balance of power.

"Yes, girls, she 's got to be initiated! She will never be any good if she does n't have a spice of this sort of thing. It is a part of our duty towards her to educate her to American ways. We are n't a lot of French bread-and-butter misses under nuns in a convent, nor stupid German Fräuleins under a governess. Rosalie must know the American school-girl as she is, and she can't do that unless she is one of us."

Catharine had gone, leaving in her place the little French-American, who, after two

weeks at school, was almost as much apart as on the first day, pursuing with conscientious devotion the tasks that were set before her, but taking little or no part in the social life of the school, which she could not seem to understand. The familiar freedom of the pupils and teachers was a continued surprise to her, to which she could not accustom herself. And so fixed had she become in the deferential old world habit that, in spite of giggles and whispers, she never failed to rise when the superior teacher entered the classroom and remain standing until she was seated. The girls were divided in their feelings towards her, the faction led by Hilda Huntingdon being disposed to ridicule her seriousness, and to make fun of her austere clothes and formal manners; the other faction, led by Dorothy Sutton, shielding her from all actual offence, and endeavoring by friendliness to remove the barrier of restraint between themselves and Catharine's proxy.

Both were leaders, always had been leaders and would be, in and out of school. Hilda, handsome, rich, and fashionable, was a law unto the juniors; a law as to what should be worn, what should be said, whom one should know, how things should be done. Hilda knew and Hilda expressed her knowledge with the confident dash of a would-be society queen. She was worshipped and obeyed by her faction. Hilda was tall and dark and voluble.

Dorothy Sutton had equally strong elements of character. But Dorothy was younger. Dorothy was short and stout and blonde and reticent. But Dorothy had convictions, and intellect and family pride and indomitable courage and scorn of shams, and Dorothy was amusing and fertile in amusement and full of the independence of her Yankee forefathers. So, since Hilda Huntingdon had chosen to pitch her faction against Rosalie Courtenay, Dorothy Sutton had drawn her forces around her for defence. Hilda's faction

was assembled in Hilda's room on this Friday evening in solemn conclave. Hilda had the floor, or rather the lounge, that being her favorite forum whence she could hurl pillows at any of her subjects who might dare to be rebellious.

"Now I vote that we have a meeting of this society in my room and proceed to initiate her into the mysteries of dressing herself in style. We could tell her that it was an initiation. Let us invite Dorothy Sutton and her crowd, and have some mystic rites. We will begin by taking off her black apron and putting it into the fire. Then we will take off her brown serge and hide it. Then some one shall proceed to pompadour her hair and put on one of my silk waists and my plaid skirt, and then let her look in the glass."

"Oh, Hilda, would n't that be going too far?" said Marjorie Cushman. "Dorothy Sutton would be mad. She 'd make us see stars."

"Well, if you don't like the idea of dressing her up, suppose we give her a donation party,

each one of us carry her something to wear, — a bright neck ribbon, or a silk waist, or a white apron, or a belt?"

"That would be worse yet," pursued Marjorie, generally desirous of a peace policy.

"Oh, Marjorie, you are afraid of Dorothy Sutton, I do believe. Well, if you disapprove of that way of converting her, I see no other way unless she converts us. What do you say to our making wholesale sacrifice of our finery? Let us march into her room all in brown cashmere with black aprons, carrying our silk waists, and flounced petticoats, and hair ribbons, and neck ribbons — throw them all at her feet, and say, 'We renounce the pomps and pompadour, petticoats and furbelows — renounce these all for Saint Rosalie.' There is no alternative. Now let us take a vote: Shall we dress Rosalie or undress ourselves, as an initiation?"

Hilda rose from her forum and, holding two pillows, presented the important question to vote.

"Dress Rosalie!" cried all the voices save Marjorie Cushman, who was far from being satisfied with the decision. But Hilda was her cousin, and Hilda did not mean to be cruel, only to have some fun.

It had been almost the "play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out," for Rosalie was disinclined to go; and when Dorothy called for her at the appointed hour, she found the "proxy" in tears over her algebra.

"I can never do it, Dorothy, it is all so different. We did n't have such difficult problems. Girls do not need such problems; it is only boys. You are all so different. In Germany in school I was the 'little American;' in France I was always American; here I am not American at all. I want to be American, Dorothy, but I hate algebra, and I do not at all like much which you do. Now when I was in Germany, at the Empress' School, there were princesses and baronesses and many well-born girls of high station, yet they all wear the same plain dress and black apron which I

wear and for which the girls smile. I see them smile because I wear it always. In Europe I did get very angry because they say such things of American girls, that they wear such fine dresses one does not like them in good schools. Now I know it is some true. School-girls cannot study when they are changing their school dresses all the time, say the 'Prussian Deaconesses.' I like pretty dresses, but I cannot be thinking about changing them all the time; and papa does not have much money, and I thought these would do as well here as in Paris or Berlin."

"Oh, Rosalie dear, don't think about it. We are awfully foolish to have so many clothes; it would be much better if we wore a uniform. Let me show you the easiest way to do that equation. You have begun at the wrong end. I love algebra as much as I hate French, and I 'll gladly exchange. You help me with French — I 'll help you with algebra. See how easy this is. You just transpose these terms so — and so — "

"Oh, thanks, Dorothy dear; you are my true friend. Yes, I 'll go out with you now, though I am afraid of Hilda Huntingdon. She has always a sneer on her lips."

"Hilda does n't mean it. It 's only her way, though she can hurt one's feelings."

It was a formidable array for Rosalie to meet, this dozen gay school-girls, dressed some in summer silks, others in light-colored woollens, all stylishly made and becomingly worn, and Rosalie drew back involuntarily, giving Dorothy an appealing look, as if to say, "There, I am out of place; I told you so." But Dorothy had courage for two, and said boldly: "Oh, if it 's a party, Rosalie and I will go back and dress."

"That would spoil everything," exclaimed Hilda aside to Dorothy. "We are going to initiate Rosalie into pomps and vanities, so we are going to show her the styles."

"I must say I think you are very rude then," said Dorothy.

"No, it is n't going to be bad. It 's only a

little fun; wait and see." Then turning to Rosalie, Hilda said with great ceremony:

"Miss Courtenay, you have only been with us a few days, but it is customary to initiate new members by certain rites and ceremonies into all secret orders. Masons and Knight Templars, The Skull and Bones, and all the college Greek letter societies have secret ceremonies, where the new members are vested with the garments of the order. Well, our order is the greatest one known — The Order of Beauty and Fashion. Every month we choose a Queen of Beauty, and decorate her with the robes of fashion. To-night we have the honor to choose you the Queen of Beauty, and have appointed Marjorie Cushman and Ruth Loring your Maids of Honor. Please seat yourself in this chair of honor, and they will proceed to invest you."

Hilda's English had been so voluble and mystifying that Rosalie had failed to discover the whole meaning of the address, and allowed herself to be led to the chair set apart for her, awaiting further developments.

"Now close your eyes" came the order. Rosalie closed her eyes, and her maids made haste to unbraid her heavy auburn hair, which fell in rich waves to her knees. Deftly rolling it over her forehead in the pompadour of fashion, they tied into it yellow bows, which made a lovely harmony of color. Rosalie was conscious by this time that a metamorphosis was in process, but one of her maids whispered encouragingly, "We are going to make you the loveliest Queen we ever had," and Rosalie submitted to having her dress taken off and her brown cashmere substituted for a yellow silk waist, with dark brown skirt.

The metamorphosis was complete, and even the girls who had most desired to ridicule felt that they had only succeeded in crowning Rosalie Queen of Beauty indeed.

Rosalie, however, was no puppet, and had understood the meaning of the whole affair, and her topaz eyes were flashing, and her heart beating wildly when Dorothy stood up

in the midst and commanded the attention of the girls, all her seniors.

"It 's all because you don't know any better, girls. Don't you know that Rosalie has been at school with countesses and princesses and baronesses, and they think it 's only foolish and American to dress like young ladies in society? We can't teach Rosalie how to dress. She has a right to wear what she likes, and I think it would be a great saving of trouble if we should adopt a uniform ourselves."

"Rosalie is all right, and she shall wear what she chooses. Three cheers for Dorothy!" cried Marjorie Cushman.

As the clamor died away, Rosalie said breathlessly: "I know you don't like my clothes, girls, but sometime when you know more about me, I hope you will like me, and not think about my clothes."

"We like you now," exclaimed Hilda, ashamed of her part in the play. "It was only in fun. We have to get some distrac-

tion, and I hope you will forgive and forget."

Rosalie threw off the yellow waist, and buttoned on her own plain one, saying:

"If you will come to my room next week I will tell you about my dress. Good-night."

CHAPTER VI

A SCHOOL OF THE NOBILITY

"WE 'LL put the Empress brooch here in plain sight of Hilda Huntingdon, and we 'll lay these decorations here to pique her curiosity. Then we 'll throw these photographs of the crowned heads, and these marked 'Photographer to the King,' with the great highfalutin German names, about promiscuously to make their eyes stick out," said Dorothy, with a flourish arraying Rosalie's belongings for the evening of the "Great Revenge," as she called the reception prepared for Hilda's "Order of Beauty and Fashion."

"I don't like to do it, Dorothy; it seems a parade of things that don't count. I am not one of the nobility; because I had these

girls for friends does not make me any better. I do not want the girls to like me for that," said Rosalie modestly.

"Of course you don't, you 'violet by a mossy stone.' You don't want to parade anything; but I know how to manage, and you must let me razzle dazzle Hilda Huntingdon. I have a grudge or two of my own to settle, and I am going to let you do it for both of us. We are bound to entertain them and amuse them, and in what better way than by showing them the souvenirs of your school in Germany, and telling all about it? I'm sure we don't know much about Berlin. To most of us the Emperor of Germany seems as far away as the man in the moon. So please don't back out, Rosalie, at the eleventh hour."

Dorothy, on her part, obtained a spread which aimed to suit the individual tastes of the leaders of the opposition. Hilda's special delight, *marron glacés*, were temptingly set forth on the table; Marjorie's preserved gin-

ger lay in appetizing crystals. There were foamy mounds of white spongy marshmallow cubes and chocolates in abundance. There were macaroons and cocoanut cakes; in fact, every indigestible compound which delights the school-girl's palate, for Dorothy had given the half of her month's allowance to sweeten the tempers of Rosalie's enemies. At last came the hour; everybody was in good humor, and Rosalie, the prettiest hostess imaginable in her green velvet dress, which Dorothy had begged her to put on for this one evening, was placed in the midst, and, as Dorothy said, "wound up to relate her history."

"It is nothing very interesting, but Dorothy made me promise to tell you how I came to wear the uniforms as you see me wear them all the time. It happens like this: My mother was born in New Orleans, and spoke French most of the time, and some English. It happens, when she was a little girl, that her father died in the war of the North

and South. Then my grandmother took her children to Europe to live, and because they speak French she took them to Germany to learn also German. It was soon after the Franco-Prussian War when grandmother moved to Berlin, and, as she was a very beautiful woman and much sought in society, some German Countess recommended to her to send my mother to the school which the Empress Augusta had founded for the daughters of officers who had died in the Franco-Prussian War. That school was at Charlottenburg, very near to which are all the palaces of the Royalty. There is the old palace of Frederick the Great, with the beautiful orangerie; there is the new palace of the Empress Wilhelm, all marble floors and ceilings; and there is the little old Schloss where the Emperor Frederick liked to live best. Well, that school was for the daughters of the higher officers, and it was supported by the State. But in the first days it was permitted to receive a few outsiders who

should pay for their tuition, so my mother was admitted. She was a little girl then, not so old as Dorothy, and she had been born in America, and taken care of by the old negro mammies, but she had to do just like the German girls, —to get up very early in the morning, and eat a very small breakfast of coffee and cold bread, and have no dessert at dinner except on Sundays, and go to chapel every morning, and at first she did not like it at all; but by and by she got used to it, and grew very fat and strong and clever, for she had to learn a great many things; and every little while the Empress would come down and see who had been a good girl, and kiss the girl who had good marks and scold the girls who had bad ones; and once in a while some of the girls would go up to the palace to a children's party, and every day they walked in the beautiful parks in two rows, wearing their purple uniforms, for in mamma's time they always wore purple uniforms. Well, by and by mamma stayed

several years, and then she came home to America and travelled about a good deal, and then married papa; and then, when I was six years old, she died; and then papa began to travel about with me, and try to teach me himself. We stayed mostly in France, but when I was ten years old papa wanted to study in Munich, and he thought he would take me to Berlin and put me at school, and then he thought of the Royal school; and he took me out to see the dear old deaconesses who had loved mamma, and they cried over me and kissed me, and begged that I should be let come in, — for the old Empress was dead long ago, and now it all belongs to the State, and is only for the aristocracy, the children of the higher army officers. But they let me go in, and I put on my uniform of blue serge, and white cuffs and collars, and a black apron, and my hair was pinned in a tight little knot on the top of my head, like all the other girls, and we got up very early, and ate coffee and rolls, and

a dinner with no dessert; and had bad marks if we did not rise when the Frau Preceptress came into the room, or did not make a courtesy to every one who passed.

"But I was very contented; it was like the convent where I had been before in France, only the girls talked German always, which I can never love like my French. But some of the girls were very good to me, and would tell me of the visits to the Schloss, where the grand carriages would come on Sundays and take them away. I did not know, for a long time, that the little girl who sat next to me at table was a princess, but her father was the brother of the Grand Duke; and that the Countess Olga von ——, who was so very fat and stupid, was related to the Royal family of Würtemberg; for it was one of the rules of the school that the girls could not use their titles, but everybody was just alike — everybody else dressed alike and were treated alike. It made no difference whether it was a Grafin, a Countess, or a Fräulein. Often when

we walked in the park we would meet the little Crown Prince and his brothers, and of course we had always to make him the salutation; but they would often stop and talk with the teachers, or single out some girl whom they knew. But we could never speak until we were spoken to, and hardly dared to give them a frank look. But they were nice little boys, and the Crown Prince had to work very hard at his studies and his exercises. And now you understand about my uniforms. I must show you my rosettes. There was always on the left shoulder a rosette to show which class we belonged to. When I first entered I wore the yellow rosette, and then the next year I had a red one. The second class wore a blue one, and the last class of all a black one, so the teachers knew always where we belonged. Then another thing which you have so little of here was the prayers. We had the prayers always in the morning and the evening, and grace for food, that some girl had always to make — a very long one

in German, which was a very hard thing to do, when you should be frightened.

"Then the teachers — here you make no respect to teachers; you are not afraid that they see what you do. There we very much fear our teachers. We try never to let them see if we eat anything or talk to one another. That is one big difference in this school.

"I did always think it was great and good to be American. It was to have a great country, vast and free, where most everybody loved God without the priests between; but it seems to me, if you do not have priests, you do not think much about God either. It is as though you are all so clever and rich you can get along without God at all. You do not thank Him for bread, and you do not ask forgiveness for sins. You have everything your own way, and you forget about God altogether. That is one big difference. I was never used to that before."

"That is so. Girls, I think we are a lot of heathens; yet it is a rule of the school that

we must go to church on Sunday. Miss Montgomery insists upon it. But we do not all go to the same church, so it is rather hard for the teachers to bring religion into the school when no two of us believe the same. But you are mistaken in thinking we don't believe in God, Rosalie. We all believe in God; but I don't suppose we think very much about Him unless He interferes with our plans, do you?" said Marjorie.

"Oh, I should n't dare to make any plans without His blessing," said Rosalie.

"Well, you were brought up in that way, I suppose. Perhaps you will be able to do something with us, and perhaps you won't. I 'm glad you have the courage of your convictions. Go on — what next? You don't like our clothes, and you think we have no religion. Do you like us at all?"

"Oh, yes; I like you because you say just what you think. You are n't sly nor mean, and don't do things behind the teachers' backs."

"Well, I am glad we have some saving grace; maybe we will get on by and by, after all. Now let 's compromise. Supposing we all wear blue serges in school and white aprons — the black ones are too ugly — and then we 'll help you with some bright waists for evenings. You would really brighten things up, Rosalie, and then we 'll suggest to Miss Graham to have grace and prayers, if you think it will put us on the same basis as the Countesses."

Rosalie smiled. "It is not necessary to be Countesses to have some reverence for God; is it not so?

"I don't want you to change your ways to suit mine, only I must explain why I do not always know about your habits. It is much prettier, much more comfortable here. I like these beautiful rooms, with so many pictures, and I like the good things to eat, and I like the good times and merry ways you all have; but I do not yet make myself *en rapport* with you. I have so much to learn in this one

year, for it may happen I will not go to school again in America. Papa is never content to stay here long, so I must be most diligent. I cannot afford too many distractions."

"Catharine did not think we had many distractions; she thought it was one 'eternal grind!'" said Marjorie, with a sparkling piece of ginger between her finger and thumb.

"Oh, Catharine was not ever accustomed to need industry. She had never to know housekeeping, or mending, or embroidery, or anything she did not like."

"And did you have all those things to learn?" asked Dorothy.

"Oh, yes; it is most necessary to learn of housekeeping. It was one important thing we learned always in Europe."

"I should not think you would have to know much about housekeeping, living in studios," said Hilda.

"No, not I; but it is very useful to know about the food. But there were others. Always the German girls have to manage the

household. My friend in Breslau has to keep the whole castle since she left the school. She has many people to provide for, and she has always the keys to the stores in her hand, to give out such things as are needed for cooking, and linen, and all such things."

"Well, I am glad we don't have to bother at school about such things. There will be time enough later; and then, there are always servants to do them."

"But they are ignorant. They have to be taught. And they would cheat you if you left it all to them," said Rosalie.

"Oh, you are away off, Rosalie. You 're in America now, and you 've lots to learn. However, you are just like a story-book. Did you ever see the Emperor?"

"Oh, yes, many times, and the Crown Prince often. He spoke English to me one day."

A knock at the door arrested Rosalie's narrative; and Dorothy opened to Miss Graham, who stood in the doorway, holding a bunch of Lawson pinks in her hand.

"I did not know you were all in here. I thought I should find Rosalie alone," she said gravely.

"Rosalie has been telling us of her school life in Europe, Miss Graham. You know Friday evenings we like some sort of a spree," said Dorothy; "but we will all go, if you want to see Rosalie."

"That is for Rosalie to say," said Miss Graham.

"Miss Graham will come in and have some refreshment too, will she not?" said Rosalie. "I do not want the girls to go yet."

"What lovely pinks! Are they for Rosalie?" exclaimed Hilda.

"It is on account of the pinks I came. They were left at the door just now with this card, which can mean no one else."

"For the lovely foreigner — for her of the topaz eyes — from

"An Ardent Admirer."

"Not for me?" exclaimed Rosalie. "I do not know any one to send me flowers."

Rosalie's surprise was so genuine that any suspicion which Miss Graham might have held, that she was in correspondence with any of the Academy boys, quite vanished.

"What shall we do with the flowers then?" asked Miss Graham.

"Give them to Miss Montgomery," said Rosalie.

"I am sure she would not wish to appropriate any of your offerings."

"Then send them back," said Hilda.

"But I don't know where to send them," said Rosalie.

"Let us see if there is any clue."

Miss Graham loosened the bunch with a deft hand and found a three-cornered note tucked closely among the stems, which she handed to Rosalie, amidst great excitement of the girls, who screamed, clapped their hands, or capered about variously as they were individually prompted.

Rosalie opened the small note, and read it with an expression of amazement and disgust.

"Fair one, if my blossoms please you, wear one on your coat to-morrow when you walk abroad. I will wear a white one, so that you may give me one glance of recognition, and meet again.

"YOUR DEVOTED ADORER."

"What a lark! What will you do, Rosalie?" exclaimed Dorothy.

"Of course she will take no notice of it. We could not allow it. Remember, girls, not a look to-morrow. We shall all, however, know the poor youth by his white flower," said Miss Graham, laughing, in the girlish fashion they all loved.

CHAPTER VII

A CORRESPONDENCE

LETTER I

December 15th.

DEAR CATHARINE, — That French girl that took your place is a stunner.

The fellows are mostly gone on her, but P. Mattocks has it the worst. He writes verses and draws pictures, and pricks his arm to draw blood to write with, and does no end of fool things.

It's been going from bad to worse. P. Mattocks is mostly a donkey. But when he thinks he's in love, he's worse than a donkey.

For my own part, I can't see why they rave over that girl. She has n't a bit of style, and she always looks down like a nun.

Some of those girls have spirit and dash and style. But it 's not the French one, and P. Mattocks is a poor fool.

He 's saved up his beggarly allowance to buy her flowers, which she spurns; and then he tried her on Huyler's. Now a girl that won't melt to Huyler's is a sphinx. If she 'd send the sweets back we 'd eat 'em up ourselves, but to keep 'em and not give poor P. Mattocks a smile is base ingratitude. If she does n't make a sign soon, P. Mattocks will go luny, which he is pretty near now.

I 'm thinking, Kit, you ought n't to have gone home and left the whole business to that French girl.

I 'll write you what P. Mattocks does next.

Yours truly,

Richard Lord.

LETTER II

Dear Catharine, — P. Mattocks is in the stocks. He 's got no end of lines, and he 's got no fun out of it. The girl did n't eat the candy after all.

The very worst of it was, the fellows did n't get it either.

P. Mattocks got called up by the tutor in charge of the house that week. The tutor had a box of Huyler's in his hand, and he said:

"P. Mattocks, did you send this box of candy to a young lady at Miss Montgomery's school?" P. Mattocks looked at the box, and he knew it for the very one. He was wrathy with the tutor and himself, but more wrathy with the girl for sending it back.

"Yes, I did; how did you get it?" said P. Mattocks.

"It was brought to me by a young lady," said old Grinds. "It was brought to me by Miss Graham."

Now old Grinds makes eyes at Miss Graham himself. Wonder he did n't tell her to keep the Huyler's. But now he had to humiliate P. Mattocks.

"P. Mattocks," says Grinds, "don't you know that you bring disgrace on the young

lady by your attentions? You do not know her; you have never spoken a word to her.

"The teachers desire you to stop your attentions. Stop them at once, do you hear?

"I shall keep the candy myself as a punishment, and don't let me know of your sending any more stuff to the young ladies at Miss Montgomery's."

Old Grinds had the cheek to put the box in his coat pocket and walk off with it; and the very next day the Professor put P. Mattocks on to the garden work for four hours, and he got a lame back and was sent to the Infirmary.

Now the best of all is to come.

Nobody knows how it came about, but when P. Mattocks had been in the Infirmary two days and was as blue as indigo, one of the gardeners asked to see "the fellow what was working in the garden on Tuesday." He just wanted to have a chat with the lad that got lamed up. Well, they let Denis go in and sit with P. Mattocks, and

when Denis came out P. Mattocks was laughing all over. Now don't you peach, Catharine, to *her*. What do you think Denis gave P. Mattocks? A *note!*

"I'm sorry you got into any trouble on my account. Don't do it again.

"LA FRANÇAISE."

Do you believe she wrote it, Kit? Find out if you can. Yours, D. K. L.

CATHARINE TO DICKIE. LETTER III

DEAR DICKIE, — Your letters are distracting. I am awfully sorry about Rosalie. But don't you believe she wrote that note. Some other boy did it, I am sure. Rosalie is as good as an angel, and is studying like anything to get into the middle juniors. She would be frightened to death to write to P. Mattocks.

It is just no use for him to waste his money on Huyler's.

Perhaps one of the other girls wrote the note, but it is much more likely to be a

boy. So keep P. Mattocks quiet, and don't let him get expelled. Boys are such torments. I'm sure his mother would have nervous prostration.

You are a good boy to stick to old Riverdale yourself.

I'll make you some candy some day.

Your old and true friend,

C. R.

FROM DICKIE. LETTER IV

DEAR K., — Candy came all right — scrumptious. No questions asked. Thanks awfully.

P. Mattocks in dumps again. He did answer that note with a poem, a scorcher, which he read to me alone. It went like this:

"*La Belle Française.*

"Oh, lady fair,
Your glances rare
Make life now glad
That once was sad.
Your words of cheer
To me are dear.
So write me more."

Days went by, and no answer. We did not meet La Française anywhere. At last one night came a picture by mail to P. Mattocks, Jr.

It was the picture of two donkeys, and under it was written: "When shall we three meet again?"

Was n't that a damper? P. Mattocks wilted. It took the starch right out of his collar.

Do you suppose she sent that in return for P. M.'s lovely poetry?

Yours truly,

R. Lord.

LETTER V

Dear Catharine, — It 's all because of jealousy. Tom Rawson, the senior, has lost his wits too, and he sent the picture as a challenge.

You bet, they had a fight behind the Gym. last night. It was a bloody one. Charles B. and I were seconds, and we had to interfere.

They nearly broke noses. P. Mattocks is n't handsome, but he is a good lot better looking than Tom Rawson, with his queer brown eyes and spectacles and such clothes.

But he gets A's in all his exams., for he is a regular dig.

If he goes in for poetry, he might send her Shakespeare or Milton or some of those old fellows' stuff, for he knows an awful lot, but P. Mattocks has more feeling and better shoulders.

I bet on P. M., and will put T. R. out of it altogether.

It is time you said a word, Kit, for P. Mattocks. It is too bad to have the school going to ruin for a girl with red hair.

Yours,

DICKIE.

LETTER VI

DEAR DICKIE, — Rosalie's hair is n't any more red than mine. It is auburn chestnut.

I don't see how you can have so little

taste as not to admire her. I'm astonished at you, Richard Lord.

She would n't look twice at that dig of a Rawson boy, and she has something better to do than waste time on P. M. He 'd better study for his exams.

C. R.

P. S. — I have written her about it. So Rawson need n't hope for encouragement.

CHAPTER VIII

HELEN OF TROY

THE correspondence of Dickie Lord and Catharine gives a rapid and fragmentary sketch of some of the events of Rosalie's first term at Riverdale. But although Rosalie had no idea of the small tempest at the Academy, she was now amused and now amazed by the attempts of the boys to obtain some recognition from her, and the whole episode had brought an element into the school which the teachers were somewhat puzzled how to meet without taking it too seriously. Long and serious had been the conferences between Miss Montgomery and Miss Graham, but not half as long nor serious as those at the Academy itself, which resulted at last in a call from no less a personage than the Master of Riverdale.

Now the Master was a bachelor by choice and disposition. He not only feared the feminine sex, but he disliked it. He had taught the Academy a quarter of a century before the disturbing element of a girls' school was planted within half a mile of it. He had fretted and fumed over the proximity. He had set rules and boundaries of adamant to prevent all communication between the two schools. But the conduct of the girls at Miss Montgomery's had so far been irreproachable. There was, however, at last a grievance, and he hugged it almost exultingly all the length of the river road, setting its offensive qualities forth in his mind in an arraignment which it would be impossible for Miss Montgomery to meet.

But when at last he was face to face with that lady, he began to feel timid, he began to doubt if he had a good case. He put his hat on the top of his walking stick, and twirled it round and round, before he could begin his argument at all.

"I am very sorry, Miss Montgomery, to make a complaint to you about one of your young ladies. It seems that you have a young girl under your tuition who has attracted the attention of several of my boys. The boys write verses about her on their Latin Grammars, and draw pictures on their algebra papers, and fight in the gymnasium. Now, my dear lady, can anything be done about this?"

"Really, Mr. Ross, I do not see in what way we are to blame. If one of my girls has been corresponding with your boys, or has met them out of school, then something can be done. I could expel her. But because one of my pupils happens to be pretty, that can hardly be a punishable offence. Could n't you compel your boys to wear blinders?" said Miss Montgomery, moved by his perplexity to an unwonted levity.

The Master of Riverdale Academy looked very much disconcerted. It had not occurred to him that he was making himself ridiculous.

"Would n't it be possible to have the young lady wear a veil?" said the Master.

"We can't compel her to wear a veil, but we can alter the route of the daily walk; but your boys go everywhere."

"Could I see the young lady myself, Miss Montgomery?"

"I do not perhaps know which one you refer to."

"Oh, have you so many beautiful girls? This Helen of Troy is a young foreigner, I understand."

"Oh, certainly — Miss Courtenay; but she is very shy, and in fact has been made very unhappy by the persistent attention of one of your boys. If there is to be any reprimand, would it not be better to give it to the boy?"

"Ahem! perhaps so, Miss Montgomery; but if I could casually observe the young lady, I might know how to deal with the boys," persisted the Professor.

"The young lady is out," said Miss Montgomery, continuing:

"Has it ever occurred to you, Mr. Ross, that it would be a good thing for the boys to come over and spend the evening with our girls once in a while? Miss Graham and I have thought that there would be less sentiment, less temptation to clandestine acquaintance, if it were not made such an offence to look at each other. So many of the boys have sisters, and many of the girls brothers, they are familiar with the species. Now, suppose that instead of telling your boys that my girls are dangerous, you allow me to invite a dozen of them at a time, once a fortnight, to play games, to try their violins or banjos, and have some music with my girls?

"Do you think you would have the boys fighting over a girl to whom they have not spoken, when they find that she is just the same kind of a being as their sisters at home, and they are just as free to speak to her in propriety? No. I think if you will try the experiment, Mr. Ross, you will find the boys will not give you half the trouble."

"It would be unprecedented, Miss Montgomery. It would end in anarchy. You do not know boys," answered the pedagogue.

"Miss Montgomery, boys are naturally depraved. Unless kept under strict discipline between the ages of fourteen and twenty, they become vicious and useless. Your Utopian scheme is meant only for a different class of beings; still, I have the highest respect for you as an educator, my dear lady. I am even willing to allow you to make the experiment."

"And may I begin with the boy who writes verses to the little French girl?" asked Miss Montgomery.

"Very unwise, very unwise; at your own risk, my dear lady."

"I am willing to take the risk. Send ten boys over Friday evening. We can manage as many as that."

"And how many tutors?"

"Not more than one," said Miss Montgomery.

"One tutor to ten boys!" said the Master

of Riverdale Academy, shaking his head ruefully, and walking down the street with bent head, while Miss Montgomery stood smiling in the window at the dire plight of the perplexed pedagogue, who, in his amazement at this new problem, had entirely forgotten the original source of his difficulties, Rosalie Courtenay, who, accompanied by Miss Graham, at that very moment confronted him in the path!

The Master of Riverdale touched his hat mechanically and absent-mindedly, then started and stared as the two fair young women met him, Rosalie, with her splendid wreath of chestnut hair and glorious topaz eyes, Miss Graham with her laughing face and sunny locks.

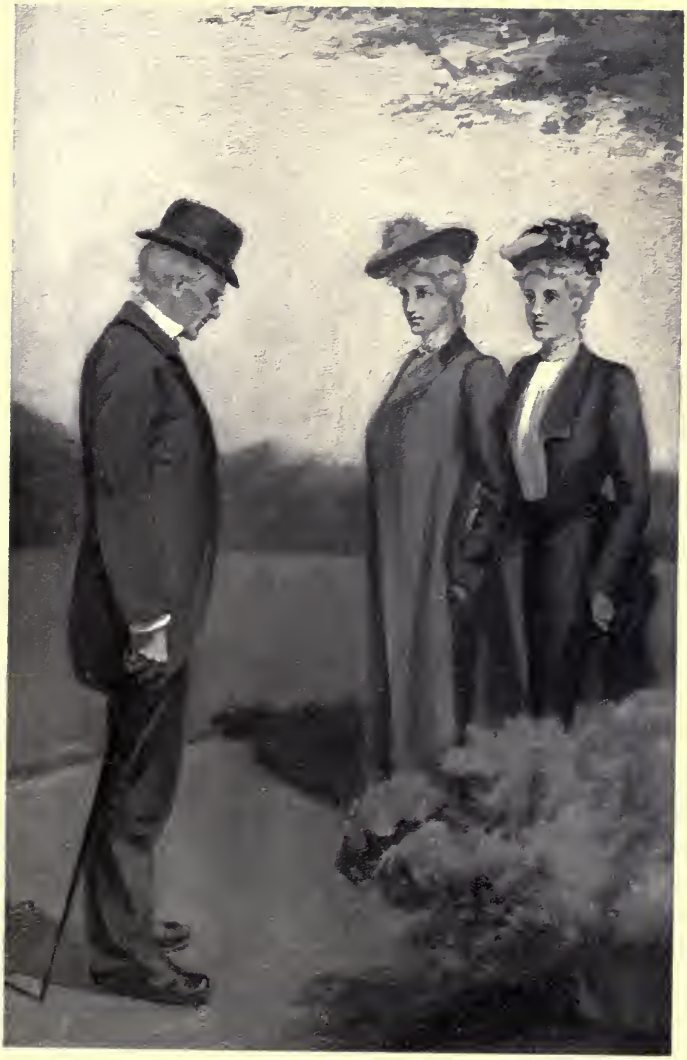
"Good afternoon, Mr. Ross. It is not often we see you on our grounds. No trouble, I hope?"

"Eh hem! Ahaw — no trouble! That is, I hope none that cannot be averted. There 's always trouble where there are boys and girls.

P. Mattocks is bewitched; that's trouble enough. And now Miss Montgomery proposes most unprecedented measures, — to let the whole school loose in your drawing-room. Pretty business! I suppose there are a dozen or more young ladies as pretty as this one here, and the French one besides?"

"This is the French one herself. Mr. Ross, Miss Courtenay," said Miss Graham.

"Well, ahem! I beg your pardon, I do indeed! You don't look dangerous. Beg your pardon."



CHAPTER IX

THE EXPERIMENT

"GIRLS, girls, the skies have opened and sent us down a lark!" exclaimed Hilda Huntingdon on the first evening of Miss Montgomery's experiment, when a great shuffling of feet announced the arrival of ten Academy boys.

"They won't know what to do with their feet; boys never do. It is a great pity they could n't wear skirts. I'm sure they would get over the awkward age much quicker if they only could. Here they come! That tall fellow with the broad shoulders is P. Mattocks; that fat boy is Catharine's chum, Dickie Lord; and there 's Tom Rawson, the tall, lanky, brown-eyed boy with glasses. I 'm sure that nice-mannered boy must be Wolcott Prince — Dorothy Sutton knows him. Oh, there comes

Miss Graham with P. Mattocks straight to us. Why does n't she introduce him to Rosalie ? There, Dickie Lord is talking to Rosalie! Mr. Mattocks, yes. Are you a brother or cousin of Mr. Harry Mattocks ?"

"I 'm his uncle," said the boy laconically, as though one's relations were rather tiresome except on birthdays and Christmas.

"His uncle! Oh, you can't be his uncle. He 's in Harvard."

"But I am, just the same. I 'm his half uncle. There are a lot of us ; we are P's and Q's. There 's Paul my grandfather, and Paul my own uncle, and there is myself, Paul junior, and then there 's my cousin *Quartus*, because he is Paul the fourth, don't you see ? So of course the next Paul must be *Quintus* — that will be all the P's and Q's we can stand. We don't have to be told to mind our P's and Q's, do we ?"

"Nor dot your I's and J's," laughed Hilda.

"If that was all we had to do, we would n't be so jolly glad to get over here, though. I

can tell you we have to toe the mark at the Academy. What 's struck the Don nobody knows, letting us all come over here. Why, it has been a crime to look at the very tip end of your noses ! "

" And some of us have rather nice noses," said Miss Huntingdon, elevating her own somewhat Roman member.

" I could n't say, really ; we don't dare look."

" But you do sometimes," said Hilda mischievously. " Now I suppose you really do know each one of us by sight, or at least in some way ? "

" Well, some of you wear red dresses and some of you wear green, and there is a nice little girl with a yellow braid who wears blue, and then there is the girl who ran away. I know her because she 's a great chum of Dickie's. She 's gone, though."

" Oh, yes ; and have n't you observed we have some one in her place ? "

P. Mattocks grew very red in the face, and

turned with relief to the piano, where Miss Graham was opening a book of music, striking the chords of a popular song, which brought the boys in a crowd to her side. Shy and self-conscious at first, they were soon joining the girls in a merry round of song; and the ice, which had been forming around the edges, was soon broken in the middle, Miss Graham easily winning the boys to express their preference for this or for that music. An hour rolled by before they knew it, and when a maid brought in nuts and apples, cocoa and cake, they fell into little groups about the small tables Miss Montgomery had adroitly placed without their knowing it.

Dickie, who was a good boy in spite of his laziness, contrived to place himself beside Hilda Huntingdon, and to see P. Mattocks cosily seated with Rosalie, Dorothy, and Wolcott Prince at the same table, where the boys were so busy in cracking nuts for the girls that they almost forgot that they were going to be embarrassed.

Indeed, the situation was such a very easy, commonplace one that Rosalie did not for the moment realize this could be the silly boy who had written such absurd verses; while P. Mattocks, brought face to face with his Dulcinea, put his Quixotic self quite in the background, and showed only the clever, well-bred bright boy that he was.

Only once did he betray to Rosalie his identity with her tormentor, when he said:

"I thought you were truly a French girl, Miss Courtenay, but you are an American after all."

"I thought I was an American in France," said Rosalie, laughing, "but here I think I am a French girl."

"They took me to Europe when I was a little fellow, and I was there three years, and when I came back I had no end of a tough time making my foreign education pass English exams.

"I got awfully behind. Perhaps a fellow picks up in the end, but I ought to be ready

to take my preliminaries now, but I don't believe I'll get through."

"It does n't make so much difference to a girl, for she wants a lot of French and German instead of Latin and Greek," said Wolcott Prince, a fair-haired gentlemanly boy, whom Dorothy Sutton had known through two summers of outing together.

"There are a lot of things a fellow 's got to know besides Latin and Greek too," said P. Mattocks. "I 'd give a good deal to know French enough to understand what Bernhardt says in 'L'Aiglon.'

"Wolcott could tell just what the little Prince was saying every time; all the long speeches about Napoleon were so much Hebrew to me. Could you understand, Miss Courtenay?"

"Oh, yes; how can anybody help understanding Madame Bernhardt's French, it is so beautiful?"

"I suppose it was beautiful to you," said Dorothy, "but to me it was just a buzzing of R's and S's."

"And to me too. Let us make Miss Courtenay read us a French play every time we come, so we can understand Bernhardt," said P. Mattocks.

"Oh, would n't that be just splendid! You must, Rosalie," exclaimed Dorothy.

"I think it would be better for you to have a French play of your own," said Rosalie.

"But our French is too bad," said Dorothy.

"That would improve it," laughed Rosalie.

"No, you read some for us next time, won't you, Miss Courtenay?" said Wolcott.

"It would be too public," answered Rosalie.

"Read 'The Little King of Rome' for us. Poor little chap! It was awful rough on him, setting that old bulldog of an Austrian over him, was n't it?" said Wolcott.

"Poor little Prince! It makes me quite ill to think about him. I could never read it about him before, and now never after Bernhardt."

"Oh, the fellows are going! Here is a

philopena; eat this with me, won't you, Miss Courtenay?"

"Oh, yes, it is very good; but what is a philopena?" asked Rosalie, bewildered.

"You must give a box of candy if you speak first," said Dorothy.

"Oh, I will not eat the philopena then."

"But you have! Good-night."

CHAPTER X

THE LEADING OF A WIG

THERE was never any doubt that it was all on account of the wig that The Players began to illustrate Miss Graham's Course in English Literature by scenes from Chaucer and Shakespeare and Sheridan. It came in a box to Dorothy Sutton from a cousin, whose familiar name was "Texas Jo." Dorothy's boxes from this remarkable cousin who lived in Texas were events of school life, and whether the boxes contained wild animals or walnuts, there was always something unusual about them. There were rugs of queer skins, and there were hats of curious make, there were lassos and snake skins, and at last came the wig, which every girl in school coveted and admired. A real wig of long brown hair!

A wig which soon became an impulse to so many dramatic suggestions that each individual hair could a tale unfold of fun and frolic, mischief and conspiracy. For by the wig a demure maiden was transformed to a Shylock, a Knight of the Middle Ages, a weird or a grave and reverend judge.

The wig became peacemaker and war-maker; it became the very head and front of the great body corporate of the Players' Club, which by its addition sprung fully equipped from the literature class-room.

The wig itself was the nucleus of the property box into which eventually all Dorothy's Texan and Mexican curiosities were thrown, and to which Rosalie Courtenay became a liberal contributor, bringing from her father's studios peasant costumes of many nations, robes of faded yet luxurious beauty; and withal, the much-needed talent for "making up" which the Players' Club had long wanted.

Indeed, nothing had given the club so much

inspiration since the coming of the wig as Rosalie herself. There had been the arduous learning of long dialogues, undertaken enthusiastically, and the making and donning of costumes more or less faithful to history or fiction, and there had been evenings when Hamlet and Ophelia had wrung tears from teachers and fellow pupils, when Rosalind and Orlando had brought sympathy and sentiment, when Mrs. Malaprop and Sir Anthony Absolute had brought laughter and applause, before Rosalie came; but after Rosalie's coming, there entered into the club the spark of genius which is called the artistic sense, that made the scenes from Shakespeare or Sheridan a rare delight to teachers and pupils.

There had never been so pretty a Lydia Lanquish, so splendid a Viola, or so arch a Rosalind; and although she might read her lines with an accent, while her company recited theirs in fluent English, she still remained "a joy forever" in her artistic cos-

tumes, correct in every detail and lovely color effects.

It was after six Wednesday evenings, given up to scenes from "Merchant of Venice," "Twelfth Night," and "As You Like It," that there came up before the Players the moving question of a French play.

"Miss Graham is President of the club, and she ought to decide it," said Dorothy.

"But my office of President is only as representing English Literature, my dear girls. I should have to resign in favor of Madame Duplessis when it came to a French play."

"Well, then we won't have it," said Dorothy decisively. "If we can't have it without Madame Duplessis, let's give it up. I am sure she would not want to come up from New York any oftener than she does now, and we don't want her either."

"Rosalie could coach us just as well as she for that, and if we give a French play it will be as the Players' Club, and not as

Madame Duplessis' class; why not?" asked Marjorie Cushman.

"It would mean a good deal of work for Rosalie," said Miss Graham.

"I would be glad enough to help the girls with the French, in return for their taking such pains with teaching me in the English plays," said Rosalie.

"Oh, would you, Rosalie? That would be grand, and Madame would be out of it altogether," said Dorothy.

"Do you think she would be offended?" asked Rosalie.

"Why not surprise her?" suggested Miss Graham diplomatically.

"That would be fine; but now what shall we have?" said Hilda Huntingdon. "Surely not any of those baby plays we have had to read. Let us do something fine. What do you say, Rosalie?"

"Do you want to work a good deal? There is 'Esther.' You know Racine wrote it for a real girls' school at St. Cyr which Madame

de Maintenon kept for the daughters of the Court of Louis XIV. It is the classique for girls in France to play."

"What is that like, Rosalie? Is there any place for the wig?" asked Dorothy.

"Oh, yes; Mordecai has to be an old man with long hair; the wig would be just in place."

"Oh, that precious wig has been funny and sentimental, but never pious. Pious Æneas thou shalt adorn, or rather Mordecai! What other characters, Rosalie? Any place for trunk hose and doublet? I'm rather stuck on trunk hose and doublet myself," said Hilda, who made quite a stunning Romeo or Orlando.

"Alas! they are all robes, girls; you know that was what Racine had to be most careful of. It was thought quite bad enough for school-girls to act at all, but as men they must wear robes very discreet."

"There are some pretty costumes in the chorus of girls all in white, and Esther is

always beautifully dressed, while Ahasuerus, the King of Persia, is quite splendid. There is a good deal of singing and some superb lines, but it would take a good many Wednesday evenings to do it well."

"Why not make it our closing entertainment for the year, girls? That would give you something to work for in French, in memorizing, in rehearsing and costuming," said Miss Graham, who knew some of the difficulties of a performance of so ambitious a play.

"That is just the thing, Miss Graham, and you will be President, won't you, and assign the parts?" pleaded Marjorie Cushman.

"I can certainly give you so much help. Then, is it a vote that the Players' Club give Racine's 'Esther' in May?"

"It is a vote."

CHAPTER XI

A RIVAL COMPANY

DICKIE TO CATHARINE

DEAR CATHARINE, — We 're all dead sure the Professor 's going off the hook. Such a change has come over the old fellow, you never would believe. Now it 's got to be a regular thing for some of us fellows to go up to the Hall Friday evenings. It 's a kind of a scrap who will go, for most of us juniors know the girls better, but the Professor is n't going to show partiality about that, and the little fellows have their chance just the same; and I tell you, Kit, Miss Montgomery does the square thing by all. What do you think she did for the little Freshies? Had a candy pull in the big kitchen. The girls put white aprons on them and made them pull candy.

They had no end of a good time, but little Davis was so homesick that he blubbered all the way home; said it was better never to see any girls, if he could n't see his mother and sister. It is right down cruel to send those little chaps up here to school. Hilda Huntingdon, that dashing girl with black eyes, a senior, has been awfully good to the little chap, and I've an idea he feels better after all for going up there.

As for us fellows, we had a concert up there last Friday, banjos, mandolins, violins, flutes, all the music we could ring out. Some of the girls play violins, and one or two of them mandolins, and Miss Graham placed us in two divisions for first and second parts, and we tried all the marches, two-steps, coon songs, and ended up with an overture. It was a great lark.

Just now we have a grand scheme on foot. It 's leaked out that the girls are to give a French play in May, and are going to invite us. La belle Française is rehearsing

them, and it is going to be something immense. Now such a pitching into Chardenal as we've had, and P. Mattocks set the plan a-going for Wolcott Prince to drill us in an opposition play. Now Wolcott Prince, you know, is almost as good at French as La Courtenay herself; and then his brother, who is an artist and lives in Paris, wrote a funny little farce on La Fontaine's fables, all those fables about the cricket, and the rat, and the frog, and the rest of them all mixed up together. Now P. Mattocks says: "Let 's give that fable play in French as a return to the girls for inviting us to theirs." It means a lot of work for me, for I am not much given to studying for fun, but Wolcott Prince is no end obliging and for such a good chap awfully popular; and if he is willing to take the trouble, I suppose I 'm in for it.

By the way, Kit, Wolcott Prince has taken a great liking for Tom Rawson. You see Prince's mother is as rich as a princess, and Wolcott found out some way that T. R. was

studying for a scholarship to help him through college. The rest of us did n't know it, but Prince got hold of it some way, and he is helping Tom R. on his French, and is going to get him a place to earn some money this summer. We 're no end sorry for T. R., but he 's in great luck to get W. P. on his side.

I say, Catharine, why don't you come to that French play ?

Yours,

DICK.

DICKIE TO CATHARINE

DEAR CATHARINE, — P. Mattocks is King of the Beasts. He has gall to take the best place, but he 'll make a good show even if his French is like an American Indian's. They 've put me down for the town rat — rather a gag on me, but I 'm fond of good living — Tom Rawson the wolf, and little Davis is going to be dressed up in petticoats and do the cricket that danced and sung all summer to starve all winter. It 's no end of fun — the practising, for we 've had those fables till we know them,

and it 's only to make ourselves up and act them out. The French teacher does n't know what 's come over us. He thinks we have gold medals at stake, we have begun to take such an interest in our French lessons.

T. R. wanted us to do a Greek play, "The Frog and the Mice," but we are n't in it with him in Greek; and where 'd be the compliment to the girls to give a play which they could n't understand? I 'm going to slip Greek once I get into college, and Latin, too. I 'm sick of the whole crowd of Trojans and Greeks; a sorry mess they made of things, between the women and the fires.

There is a fellow here that makes the very rummiest translations you ever heard. Just listen to this: "They imprinted kisses" he read "they hung by their mouths," and instead of "the wolf is a sad thing for crops," "the sad wolf ate the grass."

You are well out of it, Kit; but things are n't so bad as they were. The tutors don't jump on us half so hard, since they

go up to the Hall themselves. Miss Graham has tamed the bear garden, old Grinds says. Anyway, the bears aren't half so savage since the bulls got into the china shop.

D. K.

April 15th.

Dear Catharine, — The girls are all out in new dresses and hats, and P. Mattocks is inspired to write poetry again. What do you think, his latest was "To the Queen Rose in the Rosebud Garden of Girls;" that's Rosalie Courtenay, of course. She has a new big smashing brown hat, with yellow roses dangling on it, and tan shoes. Quite stylish for La Française, and P. Mattocks aspires to paint her portrait now in amber tints, though he can't paint anything but a barn door; but nothing but a paint brush will do her justice, he says. She makes him furiously jealous of Tom Rawson, for Wolcott Prince has told Dorothy Sutton about his having no father and working so hard for a scholarship, and the girls are sorry for him, and P. Mattocks

is awfully faint-hearted, and he is bound to score one by the French play, doing the King of the Beasts.

It 's a dead secret what the girls are going to do, but it 's something first-class; we know that. Your true friend,

D. K.

FROM CATHARINE TO DICKIE

April 20th.

Dear Dickie, — Your reformed school is great fun. Rosalie says you are nice little boys. Wonder how P. Mattocks would like that? The French play is going to be *très magnifique.* I think I shall go myself. Papa says I may go; he will be glad to have me take an interest in anything connected with school. He laughs at me because Rosalie's studies interest me more than my own ever did. Just see what it is to have a proxy! I never knew how interesting English history was, and literature, till Rosalie began to study for me; but she dresses it all up in French idioms and pictures till it is n't a bit dry, and

then it has been to her just like eating forbidden fruit, which is always sweetest, you know. Think of longing to get into an English library, and having all French and German books to read; think of knowing a whole lot of history about Germany and France and nothing about your own country, and then all at once finding you had a year to find out all you had wanted for years!

My governess says Rosalie is leading me in a race, and spurring me on to study lots of things I never thought of doing before. Shakespeare — I never thought I 'd want to read Shakespeare till Rosalie sent me those photographs they took of the players in costume. "Rosalie as Rosalind," "Hilda as Orlando." I did n't know who Rosalind and Orlando were. Then there was Dorothy Sutton as Portia, and Marjorie Cushman as Shylock, — I had to read that all up before I could even write to thank the girls for the pictures. Now I 've made up my mind to go to that French play. I 've got to study to

read it, I can tell you, and it is a hard one; but I can't let Rosalie get too far ahead of me. Be sure to send me an invitation to your French play, for I 'll be there.

Your true friend,

CATHARINE.

CHAPTER XII

THE DRESS REHEARSAL

"RAINY day and no walk; could n't be better for costumes. And Saturday!"

The Players were gathered in the large study room, in busy consultation over a pile of fabrics and a box of properties. The play had progressed in rehearsal to the point of success which demanded costumes. A division of labor had been made by Miss Graham, which gave to Rosalie Courtenay the part of the heroine, Esther, and drill master in chief; to Hilda Huntingdon the part of the King of Persia, and stage setter; Marjorie Cushman the villain, Haman, somewhat out of character, but well taken; Dorothy Sutton, Mordecai, and designer of costumes; and Ruth Loring, the Jewish girl, Elise, companion of

Esther. Others were the chorus of Israelitish girls, and the guard of the King. All were now, under the direction of Dorothy, preparing their costumes, a work much more in harmony with her ingenious taste than the recitation of French blank verse. Her nimble fingers made haste to draw, cut, and apply a mass of gold-paper designs on the long robes of white cheesecloth to be worn by the chorus of Jewish girls.

In one corner Hilda Huntingdon was being draped in a gorgeous robe, of which a plush curtain and an India shawl were the component parts; and with a patience quite unusual to her, she allowed Rosalie to stick pins with reckless disregard of surface nerves. Here and there lay gold crowns and silver fillets, halberds and shields of marvellous construction, while sheets of gold and silver paper lying about bore witness to the raw material.

"Rosalie's dress is going to be a mystery. Her papa is designing it himself. It will be just splendid!" said Dorothy, pouring out

mucilage on a sheet of gold paper with prodigality.

"There, you are gorgeous, Hilda; that curtain falls just right. Let's stick some of these ten-cent jewels in here, and sew some of these beads on there. Now here's your sceptre; let's see you stride across the stage. Oh, there, it's got to be fixed on your shoulders with safety-pins. It's going to drag off."

"Well, I don't propose to sleep in it from now until next Saturday," said Hilda.

"I think we can put some bands on it like a golf cape here. Is it awfully heavy?"

"Heavy lies the head that wears the crown," said Hilda tragically.

"Not a paper one. I believe that looks too much like a bishop's mitre now. I've got to cut out that gilt paper so that it looks more open work, and stick on some big glass beads for jewels."

"There, girls, is n't his Royal Majesty magnificent?" exclaimed Marjorie, when all was done. "Dorothy, let us get into our

horrible costumes, and make a contrast. You are going to wear those burlap bags?"

"Of course I am. Caleb Plummer's overcoat was nothing to my sackcloth and ash heap raiment. Mordecai is always spoken of as wearing sackcloth; see here!"

Drawing out from the property trunk a long garment made of two burlap bags with a hole at the top for her head, Dorothy tied a long rope about her waist, threw over her fair hair the brown wig, which by much manipulation of soap and mucilage had been made to look matted and weird; a few lines of charcoal on the face, and little blonde Dorothy was transformed to a haggard old man.

"Oh, Dorothy, how can you make yourself look so horrid? You are terrible!"

"For the good of the whole I am abject. Don't I look in bondage and bereft of hope?" she said, hanging her head dejectedly.

"I should think you did, but it must require courage."

"Art for art's sake," said Dorothy.

"Now look at that cruel Haman!" — for Marjorie had also metamorphosed herself by a fierce black moustache, heavy eyebrows, an overtopping helmet, and a black robe adorned with many devices of an executioner, battle axes, skulls, and grewsome symbols.

"No one will have a suspicion who you are, girls. Your own mothers would n't know you."

"Are n't we good foils for the lovely Queen and the magnificent King?" said Dorothy.

"Stunning."

"I don't believe Racine would recognize his own," said Rosalie.

"Oh, Racine lived two hundred years ago. We 've done a lot of stage business since he died. Now, maidens, let 's try your robes on. There, I must get off this sackcloth. The penitential garb has a horrid smell, and is very warm."

"How many sheets do you suppose the housekeeper would let us have?" she added,

studying the diaphanous cheesecloth robes, designed to make up the Jewish chorus.

"We 've got to have something draped under this filmy stuff first, and nothing but sheets will do. Who dares ask the housekeeper for six sheets?"

"I am the King, I will command," said Hilda, waving her sceptre.

"Alas! she 's American help, and knows not the law of kings," said Marjorie. "'T would be safer to try mediation. Miss Graham will work the linen closet."

"Rosalie, you ask Miss Graham. She will do anything for your play," said Dorothy.

"Not more mine than yours. You have all done as much work as I."

"You have had most of the trouble, making us say all those heroic lines with accent and expression, and you ought to have most of the glory," said Marjorie.

"Not *apropos* of sheets," said Rosalie, vanishing.

"I 've learned more French than I would

have in five years with Madame," said Dorothy after Rosalie had gone.

"And so have I," said quiet Ruth Loring, sewing the old gold cotton flannel robe which was to make her court costume.

Rosalie returned in a few moments with Miss Graham herself, both bearing an armful of sheets.

"Now, let me help you, girls," said the dear teacher, as she deposited the sheets on a chair, and shaking out one, asked, "Who is to be draped?"

"Oh, we should be so much obliged; the chorus have to be draped, and then these cheesecloth robes thrown over the sheets, this way," said Dorothy, tying the sheet in long folds about the form of one of the chorus, knotting it on one shoulder and at the waist, then covering the whole with the long garment of cheesecloth, bordered with gilt.

"Why, Dorothy, how pretty that is!"

"Do you think they will do, Miss Graham?" asked Dorothy nervously, a little tired with her long morning's work.

"Why, it 's lovely; now let me drape some of the chorus, so that you won't be all tired out before the rehearsal is over. You want to go through with it once to-day, don't you?"

"Yes, if we possibly can."

"Well, many hands make light work."

It was but a short time before the company was arrayed in their various disguises and the rehearsal well under way.

Miss Graham had until then left the work almost entirely to the girls, so that her surprise at the amount of work they had done, and the excellence of the whole performance, was the greater.

Rosalie's familiarity with the play, her beautiful French, and her great patience in going over the lines with each girl many times separately, had worked wonders, so that when all came together there were few corrections in speech to be made, and all could give themselves to the management of the somewhat cumbrous costumes, without undue thought of their lines.

"Is it going to be good, Miss Graham?" asked Dorothy anxiously when all at last could relieve themselves of the Eastern costumes and prepare for dinner.

"Good? It is ten times better than I had dared to hope for, girls. Miss Montgomery will be astonished and Madame amazed," said Miss Graham.

"Hear that, Rosalie! It is all Rosalie, she has been so patient," exclaimed three girls at once.

"It has given me so much pleasure," said Rosalie with eyes shining.

CHAPTER XIII

CATHARINE'S WELCOME

"I DON'T see how I can wait to see them; everybody busy! I am so impatient and I 've come so far."

Catharine Rogers paced the length of the reception room at the Hall on Friday afternoon. She had come up from New York by an earlier train than expected, and the girls and teachers were occupied on her arrival, so that her impatience had to spend itself in futile pacing up and down, and soliloquizing for fifteen minutes before she received a shadow of a welcome.

"Here I have thought of nothing else for a month, could hardly wait to see Rosalie and Miss Graham; and now I've come, nobody cares whether I'm here or not. Just my luck. It looks rather pleasant here. I did n't think I should ever want to come back to this

old school. Oh, dear, I wish the girls would come! What is that? Singing, music, chanting; what funny music! I believe I 'll go and listen. It comes from the music room."

Stealing along the corridor, Catharine found herself drawing nearer and nearer the music, which proceeded from one of the practice rooms.

"What curious music! It sounds something like church and something like the theatre! Why, it 's for the play; yes, they are singing in French. How fascinating! What fun! Now they are beginning again. Well, there is some work in that play. I remember there is a chorus of Jewish maidens. I 've a great mind to burst in upon them. No, they would think I was the same old sixpence. I must behave as well as Rosalie, or they won't want me to come back. How queer that music is! I think I 'll go upstairs. Perhaps I 'll find somebody up there."

So tiptoeing past the door she stole upstairs to the upper corridor, and turned toward

Rosalie's room, when a weird figure met her, a creature enveloped in musty brown with long locks powdered with ashes, and a face seamed with furrows of care.

"Oh, horrors, what is it?" shrieked Catharine, crouching in a heap on the floor.

"Catharine! Catharine Rogers!" screamed a girlish voice. A dozen doors flew open and figures in fantastic garb rushed forth, while a dozen voices greeted her:

"Oh, Catharine! Why, Catharine!"

"Lawk a mercy on me, this is none of I," laughed Catharine, after she had begun to realize that she had walked in on the last rehearsal. "I feel just like the old woman in Mother Goose who 'fell asleep on the king's highway,' and the pedler came along and cut her skirts about."

"Only our skirts are anything but cut about."

"But Dorothy frightened me out of my senses with her sackcloth and ashes, and downstairs they are chanting dirges, and alto-

gether I thought I had gotten into an insane asylum."

"We're not half as mad as we look, my dear. Miss Graham's playing for the chorus, Miss Montgomery's superintending the stage carpenter, and things are pretty well upset. Why did you come so early? Some of us were going down to meet you at six o'clock."

"Why, I was so impatient I made papa put me on the two o'clock train; never thought it would make any difference."

"Well, you'll have to go to walk or sit down in the library, for we can't have any spectators at this rehearsal; and it's the very last one. To-night we are all going over to the Academy to see the boys; they are going to have a French play, too, and before ours. They said it would n't do to give it afterwards, it is so small. Too bad, Catharine, we must go."

And the girls strode off, dragging their Eastern draperies after, leaving Catharine standing alone.

"Well, it can't be helped. I believe I will go out and walk in the grounds."

It was a beautiful afternoon late in May. Summer had touched the little village on the Hudson with premature generosity. Lawns were like the turf of old England, rich and thick, in a green velvet pile; flowers, wild and cultivated, bloomed in path and garden. Catharine, just from her New England home, where winter lingered long in the lap of spring, was intoxicated with the beauty of the country which she had left barren in November. She wandered through the country roads, feeling as free as if in her own native town, and picking wild flowers by the way. She was quite unconscious that she had walked as far as the Academy grounds, when all at once the red brick building obscured her view of the river.

"Why, here I am at the Academy! What would happen if I should meet the boys? I suppose they are all in class. I should like to take a peep into that gymnasium. There's

a little door at the back. I think I'll just take a look; there is n't any one about."

So, curiously and cautiously, she opened the small door and stepped in. She was not alone, but she was unobserved. In the middle of a large platform ten figures stood, or sat, or crouched. They were figures of what? Some had ears of donkeys and some had heads of wolves; some had backs of fur, and some had claws and hoofs. Were they beasts, birds, or fowl?

There were noises, and they came from the ring of creatures; and the sounds were French.

"Good gracious!" cried Catharine; "there's another French bedlam. They 're rehearsing, too. Well, I have had great luck. But before some one sees me and turns me out, I'll run." And gathering her skirt noiselessly about her, she made a rapid exit from the little back door and ran out of the Academy grounds.

CHAPTER XIV

LA FONTAINE'S FABLES IN MASQUERADE

THE gymnasium was, however, hospitably opened to Catharine and a score of her sex that evening. The Master of Riverdale beamed on the bevy of girls and their teachers with a cordiality which had been growing ever since the fatal experiment of social intercourse between the Hall and the Academy. The tutors, in expansive evening suits, danced assiduously in attendance with programmes, fans, chairs, and conversation. A number of the boys sat in a body on the opposite side of the hall, and left it to be guessed who composed the company of actors whose machinery was being audibly greased behind the scenes.

The girls were not only curious but sympathetically nervous.

"Will our waits be so long? Won't it be appalling to act before so many to-morrow evening?"

When, at last, the curtain was raised, it was upon a scene representing a circus tent. In the centre of the ring, mounted on a barrel end, sat the lion, king of the beasts. Ranged around him, a wolf, a fox, two dogs, and a dejected gray flannel donkey.

The lion was a lordly being. P. Mattocks had sent home for carriage robes and rugs to furnish his grizzly skin, and the fox upon near inspection would have been recognized as a rug which had lain peacefully before a domestic hearth for several seasons. But to the spectator the scene was of a real menagerie, and the timid might dread to see the lion open his heavy jaws or the fox and wolf lift their treacherous eyes.

Loud applause greeted the tableau, and it was some minutes before the overloaded beasts were allowed to lift their voices. When at

last the lion's tones rung out, they were so peaceful that all fear vanished.

He had called them together, the old fellow announced, to hold counsel as to the best means of ridding themselves of a plague which had crept among them. It was his desire that one of themselves should be sacrificed, thus appeasing the gods. The choice should fall to him who confessed himself the greatest sinner. "No one could be greater than I," said the old lion, "for have I not ruthlessly slain and eaten sheep and shepherd too?"

Then stole forth the wily fox, with unctuous flattery, laying his paw on the royal shoulder.

"Fie, your majesty, what sheep and shepherd, too, would not esteem it an honor to be eaten by your lordship? You are too humble by far."

The lion rolled his eyes, and smacked his jaws and said, "I'm not so bad a fellow, after all," and forgot to call the wolf or fox or dogs to account for their many massacres.

Then the poor cotton flannel ass, hanging his ears, trotted up and bowed his head to the lion and proclaimed himself guilty. "For I did steal grass from the field of the monks, when at mass. I did take but the browse of my tongue."

Then clamored the fox and the wolf and the dog for a scapegoat. "He stole another's grass. Let him be the sacrifice, let him hang." So they carried off the poor beast, who munched a little grass while they, the clever ones, went free.

The lion looked mournful as they led the poor beast off; but the others went proudly out with their victim, leaving old lion to recite the moral:

"Thus human courts acquit the strong,
And doom the weak as therefore wrong."

The curtain went down to much clapping, which continued so long that the actors were obliged to show themselves, like centaurs, half beast and half human, for so warm had the coverings made them that all had thrown off

false head and ears, and appeared before the curtain with skins thrown over their shoulders so that it was now easy to recognize P. Mattocks as the great lion, T. Rawson as the wily fox. There was some indignation when it was found out that Wolcott Prince had taken the part of the victim donkey.

"I think it was too bad, for that charming boy to take such a part," said some one.

"No one else could afford to," said Miss Montgomery.

"But it was very magnanimous of him, just the same."

Another long wait, when conversation became brisk, then flagged, before the curtain rose upon a new scene. Here, upon a huge ant hill of corn sat the prudent ant, a small boy in paper dress. To him comes the grasshopper, little Davis, in a gray cloak, begging for some of the provisions the ant has so prudently hoarded through the summer.

"What did you do all summer?" asked the opulent ant.

"I sang," said the grasshopper mournfully. "*J'ai chanté.*"

"Then dance now," said the ant, hugging her stores.

That gives the grasshopper an idea. Throwing off his gray cloak, he appears in light skirts over his black tights and dances a sailor's hornpipe to much applause. Then seizing off a small cap which adorns his head, holds it out like a mendicant monkey for pennies, saying in French, "Since only sing and dance I can, I will amuse for pennies."

Little Davis was a small lad of eleven, with a pathetic little face and spry little legs, which made the whole scene the more appealing, bringing a storm of applause from girls and boys; so that he was recalled many times before the third and last scene could be put on.

A dining table occupied the centre of the stage in this third scene. A pineapple cheese, crackers, cake, and other remnants of dessert spread upon it. The town rat,

Dickie Lord, in gray cotton flannel, leads in a slim country mouse also in gray cotton flannel, and, boasting of his rich fare, bids his country friend to partake fully. "Nibble of cheese and nuts galore, as I do."

Suddenly a butler enters a door at back; pulling his friend by the tail, the town rat scampers away, telling of the dangers of being caught by the vigilant servants.

"We must run our chances," said the town rat.

"Rather would I pick up what I may in the fields of my country home, than be frightened to death at my meals in your rich dining room. Good-bye."

CHAPTER XV

"ESTHER"

"OH, Rosalie, how perfectly magnificent!"

"Wasn't it so good of dear papa! You know this dress was designed for a real stage play. Papa had a friend who has been painting the portrait of a lovely woman who wore it, and she actually let me have it. Did you ever see such beautiful royal purple velvet, and see this gold embroidery down the front and on the train, and a girdle of gold and chains for my hair!"

"It is superb, Rosalie; you are a dream."

The girls gathered about their Queen in unanimous admiration, for Rosalie's dress had come at the eleventh hour. The guests were assembled, the lights were burning, the

music sounding, when the last gold link was fastened in her beautiful hair which fell in burnished ripples to her knees.

Hardly bestowing a glance to herself, Rosalie said, "We must enter, girls, courage!" and passed on to the stage as the curtain rose on a scene representing the apartment of the Persian Queen. Esther, chosen for her beauty to succeed Vashti, has concealed her race from the King, but through the assistance of her uncle Mordecai has been able to surround herself by maidens of her own race. One of these, Elise, enters from the opposite side of the stage, and in her Esther recognizes an old friend, and together they talk of the sad fate of the Jews scattered abroad, led into captivity. Esther then calls her maidens; the white-robed chorus enter, chanting songs of Jerusalem in unison. The tableau of the gorgeous Queen, in her royal purple, surrounded by the maidens in white, was lovely to see; and as Rosalie's liquid and rich recitation fell on the

ears of the audience, it was only the desire to hear more which restrained the wildest applause. The entrance of Dorothy Sutton in her sombre and grotesque costume brought a new element and gave an excuse for interruption; for although Mordecai was a tragic rôle, Dorothy's conception of the part had brought a little bit of comedy into what might have been too sad. The solemn and bedraggled appearance of the old Jew, in contrast to the splendid Queen, was almost laughable; but when Esther exclaimed, "Whence comes this sombre air, the frightful sackcloth, and these ashes which cover your hair!" and Mordecai answers, "Oh, unfortunate Queen, read, read the detestable warrant, and we are all lost; it is the fate of Israel!" the attention becomes riveted on Dorothy, who is thus made the messenger of the order for wholesale massacre of the Queen's race.

Dorothy, from whom little French had been expected, for love of her Rosalie, delivered the long speeches with marvellous fluency

and force, almost catching the inflection of Rosalie's perfect speech.

Again the chorus of maidens, this time in wailing; then the King's entrance with his guard makes a new spectacle; and still the "wonder grew and grew" how those twenty girls had been able to accomplish so much in two months.

Hilda had by practice gained the mastery of her heavy garments, and with slow but majestic movements made a fine stage entrance, and was a most successful King, threading the labyrinth of intrigue, with which Haman and others had surrounded the throne, very skilfully.

But the great scene of all, upon which the girls had spent most work, was when Esther pleads for her people before the King, his surprise at finding her a Jewess, his final restoration of Mordecai, who at the last, sackcloth and ashes scattered, appears in court costume.

Esther, throwing herself at the feet of the

King, pleads, as only Rosalie could have done, without any consciousness of a foreign tongue, or of her own exquisite beauty, with touching reverence and real feeling; the King stretching his sceptre to her, lifting her to his side, spurning the faithless Haman, all made a strong and fine scene.

"I don't know whether I've been reading the Bible or having a beautiful dream," said Catharine. "I feel just as though I was in heaven. Rosalie's acting was just like saying prayers. I almost want to cry and to laugh too."

Which was the feeling of many of the audience, though no one but Catharine said it.

But Rosalie held a beautiful bunch of roses to her face to hide her own tears, and each girl found it easier to gather the flowers which showered upon her than to say just how she felt "after the play was over."

CHAPTER XVI

THE END OF SCHOOL

THE school year was a short one at Riverdale, and the end of May found girls and teachers preparing to say good-bye.

Catharine Rogers had been invited by Miss Montgomery to spend the closing days after the play in the school, an invitation which she accepted with surprising eagerness.

"I think I shall come back next year myself, if papa will let me, Miss Graham, only there is Rosalie. I think she would do so much better in my place."

"Rosalie has made her own place, Catharine dear; and if her father is to remain in this country another winter, we have a plan to keep Rosalie. We really cannot spare her."

"To keep Rosalie, too; oh, how perfectly splendid! but what is the plan?"

"As Rosalie came to us as your proxy, Catharine dear, you have the first right to know that ever since the French play was started, and we found what a wonderful gift for teaching French was hers, Miss Montgomery has had it in mind to offer Rosalie the position of resident French teacher. Madame Duplessis would still continue to teach grammar and translation, but Rosalie would be here to talk French with the girls, and have the same sweet influence over the school which she has exerted ever since she came. She has reformed our dress, our manners, and our religious expression, and we have given her self-reliance and ambition, and opened a world of knowledge which she loves. We can never thank you enough, Catharine, and cannot show our appreciation better than by making this plan for her."

"It is too splendid, Miss Graham; the girls must know, and may I tell Rosalie?"

"Not yet, you impetuous child. Miss Montgomery has written to Mr. Courtenay, and until we have his answer nothing can be said to Rosalie."

"Oh, I hardly can wait!" said impetuous Catharine.

Catharine had, however, not long to wait, for that very afternoon brought Mr. Courtenay himself.

"It is so unexpected, my dear young ladies. Rosalie is so much of a child she cannot be of any use to you, though my whole treasure," said the artist, with much feeling.

"You must let us be the judge of that, Mr. Courtenay," said Miss Montgomery continuing; "she has been of priceless value to us in these few months, and each girl could, I am sure, tell for herself in what way she is the better for Rosalie's coming; one is less haughty, another less vain, this one more courteous, the other more generous, and yet she is a creature not too good for 'human nature's daily food,' and her influence is much

increased by her great beauty. I am sorry to confess that a plainer girl, with all her virtues, would not have worked half the wonder; but in her case beauty has been a blessing, and not a curse."

"She is the daughter of an artist, to whom beauty is not in league with the milliner, but Heaven given," said her father proudly.

"But you have no reason to object to her coming back, Mr. Courtenay?" asked Miss Graham.

"It would be the best I could do for her. Indeed, I had almost resolved to arrange it in some way; and another year I could amply repay you."

"No; Rosalie brings her own remuneration."

DICKIE TO CATHARINE

Dear Catharine, — It 's a mean shame we fellows have to stay on here two weeks after the girls have gone. But La Courtenay has at last given P. Mattocks a ray of encouragement. She sent him such a nice

little note, no mistake, her own foreign handwriting.

My dear Mr. Mattocks, — It gives me much pleasure to thank you for the beautiful roses, and to express my acknowledgment for the great enjoyment of your droll amusement of the Fables.

I have also the honor to wish you success in your examinations.

To you, agreeably and cordially,

Rosalie Courtenay.

Perhaps P. Mattocks did n't come up for his exams. with a big head. He did n't flunk, though; no more did Wolcott Prince. But for myself I can't say much. Conditions for all summer. You bet T. Rawson is going to camp with Prince.

I've asked P. Mattocks to make me a visit when you have the beauty down. I suppose her father'll give up the cart this summer. I hear he has sold a lot this winter and is going to stay in New York another year. He could n't do better than paint "Esther."

Au revoir,

Dickie.

CATHARINE TO DICKIE

DEAR DICKIE, — I am going back myself next year, and Rosalie is to be pupil teacher. Isn't that grand? and Mr. Courtenay is up for success, papa says. Rosalie won't have to go in the cart this summer, but she'll make me a visit and give me some points on housekeeping.

CATHARINE.

CHAPTER XVII

ROSALIE'S POST-GRADUATE

"WE are to go to Cambridge to see the ball game, and perhaps Class Day. Miss Graham is to chaperon us. Marjorie Cushman and Ruth Loring are to take their Radcliffe examinations, and you are to go with us, Rosalie. So there is nothing more to be said about it, for all the arrangements are made. Nobody knows when your father will take you back to Europe, and then what will you know about America? Nothing but a studio, a cart, and a boarding school. Now, Rosalie, if I am to be sponsor for your American education, I am not going to do it by halves. You are going to see the great ball game. Baseball, you know, is American; football and cricket are English. Then the game is at

Cambridge, where Harvard University is. I'd be ashamed to send you back ignorant of Harvard University. Why, P. Mattocks is going to Harvard, and almost all the Academy boys, and the girls are going to Radcliffe."

Catharine stopped for mere lack of breath. Rosalie was packing her little trunk to leave school with a really sad heart; for in spite of the hard trials at first, she had grown to love her American school, and now Catharine had come again in her characteristic whirlwind fashion, and was going to whisk her off into a new world, and she was not after all to go at once to the studio.

"I've seen your papa and my papa, and I've checks and sums of money, and Miss Graham is to go with us to buy clothes and furbelows, crimson ribbons. Oh, crimson does not suit your color a bit! What a shame, Rosalie! You must not wear Yale colors. But we'll make a compromise somehow. White, now, with crimson sash. But we'll get everything we want. I'm afraid I'm a

very frivolous person, in spite of my dear serious proxy."

There was no gainsaying Catharine, even if she were not in league with Miss Graham, and Rosalie found herself carried off to Boston with a rapidity which was quite bewildering to her little old-world self. For in spite of the fact that Rosalie had travelled all over Europe, it had always been at a very slow and conservative pace, compared to which the American experiences were very dizzying indeed.

Miss Graham herself seemed younger and prettier than ever before when she had safely piloted her four charges through that wonderful underground Boston railway, which Rosalie found vastly superior to London's like rapid transit, across the new Harvard Bridge, and into the heart of the University town itself. For Miss Graham had been a Radcliffe girl, and perhaps no feature of the trip gave her such a thrill as the sight of the Radcliffe seniors of 1901, floating along that sacred

strip of Garden Street which bounds the Alma Mater, their imposing gowns and caps breathing the importance of the graduating season.

"Oh, shall we ever wear that dress floating the street, Miss Graham?" asked Marjorie Cushman, with a feeling strangely unlike Miss Graham's.

"In a shorter time than seems possible, my dear, if you pass your examinations as we hope," said the teacher proudly.

"They look so funny!" said Marjorie.

"I would not wear them for a farm," said Catharine, looking at her own pretty linen suit with conscious vanity.

"The danger is not imminent, my dear," said Miss Graham, with a smile.

"You mean I could not if I would, and I would not if I could," said Catharine with characteristic pertness.

"But do the girls go about just like the boys in this town where there are so many young men? There goes such a pretty girl

all alone with a pile of notebooks under her arm. Nobody looked at her, not even those college boys who passed her," said Rosalie.

"They go everywhere, my dear, except to the Square, alone; and even then you may see two or three together, but never in the evening unless without permission. They seem very free, but somebody knows what they are doing most of the time. It would not do for a Radcliffe girl to go too far in her freedom. The Dean always knows."

"How can she know?" asked Marjorie Cushman, with an intense personal interest; for to Marjorie this visit to Cambridge brought the college into tempting nearness, and seemed to start her wings to alarming flights of freedom. For at the school they were, after all, but full grown children, Miss Graham and Miss Montgomery standing much in the place of parents; but college meant wider opportunities for self-reliance, independence, daring, and courage. To a girl whose whole life had been spent in the provincial protection of an

inland New England town, life in a boarding school near New York had meant an experience of ever widening horizon, and Marjorie hardly realized how restricted that experience had been until brought into the movements of the university town, where there seemed to be a hundred independent streams pouring into one great sea of learning from every quarter. She did not realize that the college life at this time was more actively in pursuit of June festivities, that the excited chase of the girls was after the Class Day gaiety, and the wild enthusiasm of the boys was in anticipation of a great intercollegiate game. It was not all the hot pursuit of learning. But to the prospective college girl, measuring the life by her own experimental standards, it seemed the pulse of the whole college year. To Rosalie it was an entirely new plan of life outside of anything which she had ever known; and although she was absorbed in it, she was not prepared to understand it.

Catharine, of all the girls, took a point of

view wholly unsympathetic. "I've no use for college girls myself. I'd much rather be an ignoramus!" and Catharine's was always the last word, for she was so good-naturedly satisfied with her own opinion no one thought of arguing with her.

So Miss Graham made no attempt to argue with Catharine, but turned to answer Marjorie.

"Oh, the Dean you know is at the head of Radcliffe; and although you must go to her for your examination papers, she has really little or nothing to do with the studies, but the personal character and conduct of every girl at Radcliffe it is her duty to know and follow. Just where and how the girls live, whether they are quiet or noisy in their boarding places, loud or modest in their dress, whether they are overworking or under-eating, she soon finds out; and if a girl is under the ban or favor of the Dean, she soon knows for herself."

"You really frighten me, Miss Graham," said Marjorie.

"You will have no cause to be afraid of her, Marjorie dear, for you do not want to misbehave."

"And you think I would, don't you, Miss Graham?" said Catharine.

"But you don't intend to go to college, Catharine," said the teacher with a merry smile; "and I truly do not think the Dean would approve of you. But here we are at one of the bachelor maid homes. Perhaps Rosalie would like to see how our American college girls live."

"Oh, we all would!" said Marjorie, as they stood with fluttering hearts on the doorstep, until they were admitted to the large, low, old-fashioned Cambridge house which was the home of a dozen girls under a cheery matron.

Miss Graham and her young friends found half a dozen gathered in a typical Radcliffe study parlor. The walls were well covered with posters more or less grotesque, which could not but offend Rosalie's artistic eye, but

which the other girls found strikingly amusing. Harvard flags were hung above mirrors, and crimson pillows were piled on sofas, books covered tables and chairs, while girls sat on cushions on the floor. There was a general scramble on the arrival of Miss Graham and her charges; some of the girls rushing into their rooms to do over their hair, others to bring forth five o'clock tea service with the refreshments tucked away in boxes or cracker cans, and then the air of general disorder gave way to one of cordial hospitality. The college girls put the younger girls at their ease; their few years of seniority thus proving its advantage, for our younger friends had felt an imperceptible awe of the college girls, in spite of Catharine's voluble disdain.

They were a merry crowd. With the good fellowship of men mixed the more graceful virtues of society girls, and Rosalie at least was amazed to hear a sweet voiced, delicate featured, exquisitely dressed girl of nineteen say to Miss Graham, "Our course in Greek is

awfully stiff. We are reading prose and poetry, and putting English verse into Greek hexameter."

Still another talked of "writing a thesis" on a subject too abstruse for Rosalie's English mind to comprehend even the letter. But they all seemed as light-hearted as Catharine herself, and

> "Still the wonder grew and grew
> That so small heads could carry all they knew."

But Rosalie gave it up at last as one more American problem which she was still too European to understand; and when they said good-bye she looked at each girl in silent but wondering admiration, making her foreign courtesy like an Eastern salaam in its obeisance.

CHAPTER XVIII

HARVARD'S GAME

"ROSALIE will have to be American to-day," said Catharine as they rose from their late breakfast at the hotel, preparatory to driving out to the great ball game. Rosalie would not have been human if she had not caught the fever which was in the very air that beautiful June 22d, when every street car and shop window waved the crimson flag, when even the flowers in the public garden seemed to burst with a prodigal bloom of crimson blossom.

Miss Graham, who had been somewhat appalled by the task of piloting her party through the crowd to the ball grounds at Cambridge, felt a great load taken from her

shoulders when, the night before the game, she had received a telegram from Catharine's father announcing that he would arrive in the morning in time to escort them; and as seats had been secured a week in advance, they felt that their path was gently smoothed.

"Now, girls, dress carefully to-day; for muslins will be torn and flowers crushed. Stout skirts and pretty shirt waists will be the most serviceable outfit. You can show your colors by your parasols and these dark red roses," said Miss Graham.

And so forewarned they were forearmed for the crowd which, even by starting three hours before the game, they could not escape.

But although it was only twelve o'clock when they were seated in their high seats which commanded a splendid view of the field, every moment of waiting seemed to bring some fresh sensation to the excited little party to whom everything was new. They tried to find some meaning in the most

accidental occurrences, and had to give up the attempt to make every cheer which greeted the entrance of some well known college character into a triumphal march for the champion nines who did not appear until thousands of sympathetic spectators had passed through the wicket gates.

Catharine sat close to her father, alternately seizing his hand and his opera-glasses, plying him with rapid questions as to the position of different college societies and classes; for Mr. Rogers was a Harvard graduate himself, and, pressed and hurried business man that he was, for that day but a boy again, his straw hat bound by a crimson band, a crimson badge worn proudly on his coat; and with the first notes of the "Fair Harvard," he added his voice to the long college cheer, the "Nine long Harvards," to which the valiant "Sons of Eli" responded with their rousing cry.

Rosalie was bewildered, but, partially grasping the significance of the whole, she was

caught on the waves of enthusiasm and found herself cheering equally for the Blues as the Crimsons. The game had begun. Yale was first at the bat.

"You must not cheer Yale, Rosalie. We are for Harvard."

"Why not?" said Rosalie. "He hit the ball well. Did n't you see it go so straight and swift? Those boys have to run like the wind to catch it."

"You may cheer when they catch it. They are our side, Rosalie."

"It is very bewildering," said Rosalie. "But see, girls! See! Look! The sky is alive with Harvard's colors!" For with the flash of an eye hundreds of crimson balloons, every one bearing the white Harvard "H" on it, sprang into the air. Majestically they floated, though some Yale prophets sang out, "So it goes! Harvard 'll soon be in the air." "Yale will soon be in the soup," cried the opposite party, while up from Harvard's side rang the new song:

"Yes: we 'll run Yale off her feet;
Yes; we 'll run Yale off her feet;
For we're going to play a great old game of ball."

"I like that big Frantz; the mighty Frantz they call him, don't they, papa?" said Catharine.

"He is splendid at the bat, but now see him run; but he is running too far. Yale is there before him."

The ball flew so swiftly and the boys jumped about so inconsequently that Rosalie gave up trying to cheer the right man; for she found she was always cheering at the wrong time, and that her sympathies would go out to the boys in blue. But when there came a pause of action, and some of the players threw themselves down on the ground as if for a rest, something queer happened. A little old man pottered across the field and took his stand on the home plate, waving a silk hat in one hand and a Harvard flag in the other. Then the crowd cheered and the band played, "Here 's to old Yale," though never was old Harvard more triumphant.

"Who is that man, papa?" exclaimed Catharine, looking eagerly up into her father's face, and surprised to find tears in his eyes.

"That's old John the Orangeman, the mascot of all our games for the last thirty years. He used to drive a little donkey cart in my day around from hall to hall, selling to all of us and trusting many of us beyond our merits. His memory for faces and names should have made him President of the United States; for he remembers the old fellows, as well as the young ones, year after year. He has taken Harvard defeats sadly to heart, while her victories have given strength to his old limbs. He is in high spirits to-day."

"They will never get through cheering him. Yes, they will, for Harvard takes the bat again."

The girls, even Rosalie, stood up in wild excitement, waving their crimson parasols when the mighty first base made his great

home run in the third inning, though Rosalie was still very sorry for the blue boys.

As the game went on, Yale gained strength. Her sensitive heart began to waver again towards Harvard, and she resented the Yale chorus, "Poor old Harvard," as stoutly as any of them; and when the plucky little Harvard pitcher showed his valor undaunted by the dampening "Undertaker Song" of the Yale crowd, Rosalie became an unwavering partisan for the crimson standard. And although the end of the game seemed so like the beginning to her that she was unconscious of the crowning feat, there was no mistaking the clamor of the crowd when the captain of the Harvard's nine was lifted aloft and carried to the gymnasium building. Rosalie recognized the victor with beating heart.

"Those blue flags should be at half-mast," said Catharine with vindictive spirit.

"No half-mast for Yale, my dear," said her father. "While the blue waves it will fly high, but soon you will see it disappear

entirely. The blue crowd will efface but not abase itself."

And so it did. "Like the Arabs" of the poem, they folded their tents and silently stole away.

CHAPTER XIX

OLD FRIENDS IN NEW SCENES

FRENCHMAN'S BAY, JULY 16TH.

DEAR DICKIE, — How splendid that you are going yachting in August; for I am going to be with Rosalie at the Cove all through the month. Did you ever hear anything so perfectly elegant as Mr. Legendre Courtenay's luck? That rich old gentleman who engaged him to do so many pictures has given up to him his summer cottage for the whole season, where he is to paint his favorite views. He is to have the whole cottage, with the servants and horses, and to live like a prince. The old gentleman wants his favorite views from every room in the house, — the Mt. Desert hills from the upper windows, the shore from

the library, the bay from the piazza, a bit of rock here and a little nook there, — and Mr. Courtenay is enchanted. He rebels against the fog once in a while, but the old gentleman wants fog and all. Meantime, Rosalie is chatelaine to perfection. The cottage is no little affair, but a beautiful stone house overgrown with vines and surrounded by pines. Can't you imagine Rosalie there on the lawn with the sea in the foreground and the blue Mt. Desert hills at the back? It makes even me poetical! Steer your yacht down that way in August with the nicest Academy boys you can find, and we will compare notes on the vacation.

Don't eat too much and grow too fat, Dickie, is the advice of

Your old friend,

CATHARINE.

AUGUST 1ST.

DEAR CATHARINE, — I am not too fat. In fact, I am quite thin. Father has worked me

to the bone this summer in the office, and I weigh only 160 pounds. We are all to board the "Maid of the Mist" on Saturday; six of us boys, besides the crew and my father and uncle. We are going to take the coast, North Shore, and Maine. Father says we can't make any dates on account of storms and fog, but we shall touch at the Harbor some day, so listen for our megaphone which may call you up some day when you least expect us. You need not look for Tuxedos and patent leathers. We are off for a good time, and sweaters and very red noses will be our make-up; so don't be too critical.

Yours,

DICKIE.

It was very hot in the cities, it was very hot in the towns, it was very hot in the mountains that first summer of the twentieth century. All who could fled to the cool north shores of New England. This New England shore was so new to Rosalie. She

knew Brittany and Normandy, Cornish and Wales, but the rock bound coast of Maine, with its rugged beauty, its native rusticity, and its cultivated cosmopolitan luxury, was new to her. The house which her father had so fortunately fallen into seemed to her like some lovely French castle, and she found herself leading the life of a little foreign countess, and loving the quiet and beauty as she had never loved the bustle and rush of the American towns.

The house faced the open bay, across a stretch of lawn, bordered by a rocky wall on which Rosalie loved to sit, and try to sketch some faint impression of the islands across the water.

She ordered her household like a little old-fashioned duchess, having learned her housekeeping lessons of the dignified Prussian deaconesses and the quaint French nuns; and when she had set all in order, she went out to find the needy among the fisher folk along the shore.

But here she had to learn that it was America, not France; that the simple peasant folk of Brittany were not to be found; and that the native Yankee is not willing to be befriended or visited in that spirit of feudal protection.

"It was only one more lesson she had to learn," said papa.

"I thought there might be children, papa, to be taught, or old people to be read to in those cottages, but they did not seem to like it, and the children all go to school, and I am afraid I had better let them alone."

"Oh, yes, dear child, the best you can do for them is to give them employment. These independent people are n't peasants. If you want something to amuse and interest you here, you may have some of your school friends down, take some drives, and go out on the bay," said Mr. Courtenay.

"But I've always been accustomed to do something besides amuse myself, papa, you know."

"Well, dear child, you will have a good deal to do to keep this establishment this summer, and entertain your friends. If, however, you can find something else, so much the better."

So Rosalie invited Catharine and Dorothy Sutton to make her a visit, and when both girls had come, they were driving along one of the loveliest roads in the town of Eden when Catharine exclaimed, "If there is n't Hilda Huntingdon!"

Hilda was staying at Bar Harbor. She would love to drive to the Cove if she might bring some friends.

And, as it was a beautiful and famous drive to the Cove, Rosalie soon found that she was very popular indeed, and that the east piazza facing the bay was quite likely to be full of young girls almost every afternoon; and as they all found it often too warm for tennis or golf, and even ginger ale and cold tea could not be consumed indefinitely, Rosalie asked them to join her

in devising some way of helping the people around her.

"It is so different here from abroad. They do not like to be helped, and yet they suffer so. The winters are so long. It is often May before the snow is gone, and there is nothing to do. I have found a poor woman with nine children who does my washing. Her husband catches fish. He doesn't like to have her wash, but she says, 'When I ask him for a dollar, it is seldom he can spare it.' Now, girls, don't you think we might do some sewing for that poor woman while we are sitting here talking? Let us make some pinafores and petticoats; one of us can read aloud."

"Let us call it the 'Piazza Pastime Party,'" said Catharine.

So it was started, Rosalie's little helping society, and the girls had some merry times over it too.

The "Piazza Pastime Party" was in full swing one August afternoon. A large table

occupied one end of the piazza, and on it were small garments of all kinds. A hand sewing machine was being deftly managed by Dorothy Sutton, who was running up long seams while others basted, felled, and accomplished many of the mysterious intricacies of plain sewing. A neat maid in dainty cap and apron had placed a tray of cakes and iced tea within reach, and the girls were chattering with summer happiness, enjoyment of the beautiful scene, the invigorating air, and the sense of being really useful as well as gay, when all at once Catharine exclaimed, "It looks to me as if there were a yacht becalmed out there."

"There is very little wind to-day; almost a dead calm," said Hilda.

"Where is the field glass, Rosalie?"

Just then, across the stillness of the August afternoon air, came a faint sound.

"Hallo! Hallo! Is this Mr. Courtenay's cottage?" The distant weirdness of a megaphone call.

"Girls, it is the 'Maid of the Mist,'" cried Catharine, throwing the breadths of little Sarah Jane's petticoat on to the piazza.

"The 'Maid of the Mist'! Why, the boys are on that!" exclaimed Dorothy, stopping her machine.

"But they can't get ashore. There is no wind," said Rosalie. "I'll speak to papa."

The other girls had flown across the lawn to the rocky shore while Rosalie went to find her father. Together they walked down to the shore, Rosalie with her pretty white sunbonnet, her father in his artist's skull cap.

"Rosalie's one fault is that she will not get excited," said Catharine, dancing about on the rocks, while Rosalie walked quietly along.

"That is her great charm, my mamma says," said Hilda. "She has the repose of a duchess. Mother says we are giggling schoolgirls beside her."

"How can she help it?" said Catharine, rushing up to the artist, saying, "Mr. Courtenay, will you row us out to the yacht?"

"I think they are coming in to see you, Catharine. See! they are lowering their boat, we will wait for them."

Nearer and nearer the little boat came, and soon the boys jumped ashore, followed by Dickie Lord's father. The boys had been two weeks on the open sea, and were bronzed and burned, but looked manly and strong. Dickie had lost some of his rotundity, and Phil Mattocks and Wolcott Prince had gained a little.

"What a jolly place!" said Dickie. "Why can't we anchor off here for a few days, daddy? I 'd like to get off these sea legs a little and play some tennis."

"That is for Mr. Courtenay to say. He is here to work. I do not think it fair to break into a man's castle like this without saying 'by your leave.'"

"We should be very pleased to make you at home for a few days. I can work while my daughter plays hostess."

CHAPTER XX

HOW THEY BROKE ROSALIE'S ENGAGEMENT

"A REAL Prince!" said Mrs. Huntingdon reflectively, and vainly trying to conceal a consciousness of pride.

Hilda Huntingdon's mother was to Rosalie's mind much nicer than Hilda herself. She was a large, handsome, matronly woman who seemed ready to mother a whole flock of motherless girls like Rosalie and Catharine; and, since she was staying at Bar Harbor at a hotel, she had been very ready to spend more or less time matronizing the party of boys and girls which, since the arrival of the "Maid of the Mist," had gathered on the lawn about the Cove.

The "Maid of the Mist" had been at anchor four days when the Prince arrived.

The Prince was only a Russian prince, but still a prince of that domain, an intimate friend of Legendre Courtenay. In their student days in Paris they had been great comrades. The Prince had been poor then, but had since come into large estates; and the boy, his only son, had been educated in England. They had come to America to see the country and to find Legendre Courtenay, the artist friend.

"Yes, a real Prince, as princes go in Russia. A good fellow!" said Mr. Courtenay in answer to Mrs. Huntingdon as the Prince and the boy appeared.

They both spoke English irreproachably to Mrs. Huntingdon, but with Legendre Courtenay and Rosalie the conversation was wholly in French, and there Mrs. Huntingdon found Rosalie was at home indeed.

"She is not half American," said Mrs. Huntingdon, "though the girls have tried hard to make her so."

"Take Petrof down to the shore, Rosalie.

The boys will be coming off the boat," said Mr. Courtenay; and Rosalie went off with the little Prince.

"It 's a long ago compact, Mrs. Huntingdon. I promised Rosalie to my friend's boy when they were children. It is an old world fashion; I have begun to wonder if Rosalie were too American to keep it."

"Oh!" gasped Mrs. Huntingdon, "we can never think of that arrangement for our children. I am sure Hilda would want to choose for herself, but Rosalie seems different. She is so very obedient. And a Russian Prince!"

"Petrof is a very good boy," said the Prince. "He is going to school in England, but Rosalie likes to live on the Continent. She is very beautiful," sighed the Prince. "Your American girls are all very beautiful, but not docile."

"Rosalie is docile," said Mrs. Huntingdon; but she watched the group of girls and boys on the shore with a sad feeling. "They are

only children, Mr. Legendre. I would let the Prince wait awhile."

"It is nothing but an arrangement. The children go on with their school, and by and by they marry. It is a great convenience," said the Prince. "Petrof has not seen Rosalie since she was six years old. He will not see her for several years again. Then they marry, and take care of my estates. She is charming. He is rich. It is altogether satisfactory, Legendre, do you not think so?"

"I did think so until I came back to America, and I am not going to give up my end of the agreement. But Rosalie has been mixing with American girls and boys, and she may have a mind of her own," Rosalie's papa added a little sadly.

"Wait awhile, Mr. Courtenay," said Mrs. Huntingdon.

"You and Petrof are good friends, Rosalie," said the Prince at dinner. "By and by you will marry to please your old fathers. It will

please your father. It is an old plan. You do not dislike Petrof."

"I do not dislike Petrof, but I shall always remain with papa. I do not want to marry any one," said Rosalie simply.

"Not now, of course not; by and by when Petrof is older, and you too," said the Prince. "To please papa. Do you hear, Courtenay? If it please papa, after a long time Rosalie will marry Petrof. You understand, Petrof. You and Rosalie will marry by and by," said the Prince.

The boy turned red, for he felt that Rosalie was taken at a disadvantage, and he had been at an English school, and Rosalie said nothing.

It was Catharine who told the boys. She was too excited to keep it, and she sent a note to the yacht by one of the gardeners.

DEAR DICKIE, — That Russian Prince, to think of it, has a mean plan to marry Rosalie to his boy. There is nothing the matter with the princelet. He can't help being a prince, and he speaks Eng-

lish well. But after all the pains I 've taken to educate Rosalie into a straight, out and out American girl, to spring such a trap is downright treachery. To engage a girl of six to a boy of ten, and then when they are sixteen and twenty to make them stick to it, is too contemptible. I wish you boys were pirates, and could just bag that princelet, and leave Rosalie fancy free. Not that she cares a rap. It is just because she can't shake off that European dust. She must do as papa says. If papa said, "Be the twenty-seventh wife of the Shah of Persia," she 'd walk right along, and be a Mormon. I am so disappointed in Rosalie. I would go away to-morrow, but Dorothy Sutton says we must stand by her and see this thing out. America versus Europe.

Come to the rescue, boys!

Yours,

C. R.

And it was in answer to her call the next morning found the boys together at back of the great house, quite out of sight.

"I call it the meanest kind of a handicap," said Phil Mattocks. Phil was the centre of the ring, facing the young Prince, the boys making a circle around them.

Phil was prepared to fight. "I 'd have married her myself if I 'd any chance, but to take an advantage of all those years, it is a downright handicap. You 've got to fight anyway."

"Now, fellows, it 's six against one," said the Prince. "But I 'm not afraid to fight you. I have n't taken any advantage. I did not know anything more about it than you did. It was my father that did it. Supposing I should see some other girl I liked better myself, where would I be? In a box. I 'd have to stick to the agreement," said the princelet.

"I wish you would see some other girl, but you never will. There is n't another girl anywhere like her," said Phil savagely.

"But suppose that I should, I could n't do anything about it. You fellows have your own way. Well, Mattocks, are n't you going to fight?" said the little Russian, preparing to take off his coat and clinching his fist like a well-trained English school-boy.

But Mattocks stood rooted to his place, looking over the Russian boy's head with the dazed and scared expression of a school-boy caught fighting, for there stood Rosalie herself.

"No, don't fight, boys. Phil, you have no cause to fight. Petrof and I must settle this business ourselves. It is all nonsense anyway. Petrof, you are right. You might see somebody else, and I might. Let us declare this to be an unjust compact of our fathers. I am American; you are Russian."

"Good, good for Rosalie! She is American after all!" exclaimed Catharine, rushing in. "Let us go together to the Prince and Mr. Courtenay, and tell them that Rosalie is an American and must not be bound."

"And Petrof has had an English training and should be free, too," said Wolcott Prince, chivalrously standing by the stranger.

"That is so. We will go," said Rosalie; and as the two fathers sat on the veranda, smoking their pipes, the group of young people came solemnly up the steps.

"Mr. Courtenay," said Catharine, the self-constituted spokesman of the group, "you must break off the engagement of Petrof and Rosalie. It is n't fair. Girls and boys can't be traded off like Russian slaves. When they are men and women they will rebel. Now Petrof may not love Rosalie by and by, and Rosalie may not love Petrof, and marriage without love is a sin. That 's what we American girls believe. You love Rosalie, and the Prince loves Petrof. Don't make them unhappy. We want you to break it off. Let them be free to choose. Please do, Mr. Courtenay. Please do, Prince. We are only girls and boys, and we don't want to think about marrying for years and years, and we don't want to have Rosalie think about it either."

Catharine stopped and looked at the Prince, who looked at Petrof. "What do you say, my boy?" he said in English.

"I say she is right. You should n't have sent me to school in England."

"That 's it," said Mr. Courtenay, "and I should n't have brought Rosalie to America to school; and as we have educated them by English standards, I suppose we will have to take the consequences. We will have to let them choose for themselves."

"I fear so; but it is a long time yet," said the Prince, still cherishing a forlorn hope.

The next day they said good-bye.

CHAPTER XXI

HUNTING THE SNARK

"ROSALIE, I can't make you out. You say you are an American, and yet you are not truly in your heart, are you? Tell us what it is you do not like about us," said Catharine.

The Prince and princelet had gone. The "Maid of the Mist" was still at anchor in the bay, truly a "Maid of the Mist," a yacht wrapped in the deepest of Bar Harbor fogs, unable to leave the bay, even though the boys were but half as willing to leave the delights of life on the Island.

Catharine and Dorothy sat at Rosalie's feet before the open wood fire, which every Bar Harbor cottage lights on August evenings. The girls were alone. Mr. Courtenay had gone out to drive, and the girls were

having a cosy, quiet evening; but Catharine, as usual, was doing most of the talking. She had not ceased to study Rosalie curiously ever since the Prince's visit, and that her observations had not brought her satisfaction was made apparent by the question which was now without warning shot at Rosalie. Rosalie rubbed her eyes dreamily, as though to scatter some of the pictures she had caught in the fire glow, then, and without turning to Catharine at all, but gazing steadily into the fire, said: "That is the question I ask myself all the time, and but now I was seeing lovely pictures in the fire which recalled to me so much some places that I love on the other side. See, Dorothy, there on that side is a bright pink cloud just falling on that mountain of ashes. That is just like the *Jungfrau* in the morning. Then down there in the coals is a queer little dark-red cottage for all the world like a little house on Lake Thun where papa and I spent a summer. I think I must be like a cat — it is

always to the places my heart returns. I love Americans better than I do America."

"But do you love Europeans as much as Europe? You like me and Dorothy and Hilda and the boys, but there is always something you don't like about us," said Catharine.

"Oh, if there is, I don't know how to say it. You are so frank, so honest, Catharine, one could not help liking you; and Dorothy is so loyal."

"But just the same you don't wholly like us. Now, if it were n't that you did n't like that way of doing things, would n't you rather live in Russia with Petrof than in America with somebody else?"

"That is not fair. I don't care for Russia nor Petrof. I should be happy with papa in America, though I should feel very unhappy if I thought I should never see Europe again. I told you I was a cat, Catharine."

"I don't think you are a cat, but I see that if you marry an American you would

have to live part of the time in Europe, so you are n't patriotic yet, and I want to find out what is the matter with us at home."

"Well, you are always so restless for one thing, and not content."

"Quite so, quite so; but discontent is the gift of the gods. I think you don't appreciate us. You will have to give us another trial."

"I think I am too stupid to understand you, that is all. I realize that I think differently, and feel different inside."

"The trouble with you is, Rosalie, that you are too serious. It is very bad for a girl to be brought up with nuns. It either makes them serious or sly. Now you are n't sly, but you are awfully serious. You need a whole lifetime of frolic, nonsense, nonsense verses, and such stuff. Now, I don't believe you ever heard of 'Alice in Wonderland.' The 'Jabberwock' is a myth to you, and the 'Snark' a riddle. Now, do you know the 'Snark'? Well, listen, and I will to you

the tale unfold, and then I'll tell you how to have a frolic."

"A Snark, a Jabberwock? I do not know any such English words; perhaps they are German?"

"There, Rosalie, I told you, you do not have the faintest idea of nonsense. Do you know what a Boojum is?"

"Oh, Catharine, you are making fun of me."

"I am trying to make fun for you. Now listen to the story of the 'Snark;' of course not all of it, you must read that for yourself, but part:

"'My father and mother were honest though poor —
'Skip all that!' cried the Bellman in haste.
'If it once becomes dark, there 's no chance of a snark,
We have hardly a minute to waste.'

"'I skip forty years,' said the Baker in tears,
'And proceed without further remark
To the day when you took us aboard of your ship
To help us in hunting a snark.

"'A dear uncle of mine, after whom I was named,
Remarked, when I bade him farewell —'

'Oh, skip your dear uncle!' the Bellman exclaimed,
As he angrily tingled his bell.

"'He remarked to me then,' said the mildest of men,
'If your snark be a snark, that is right.
Fetch it home by all means — you may serve it with greens,
And it's handy for striking a light.

"'You may seek it with thimbles, and seek it with care;
You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway share;
You may charm it with smiles and soap.

"'But oh, beamish nephew, beware of the day,
If your snark be a Boojum! for then
You will softly and suddenly vanish away,
And never be met with again.'

"It is this that oppresses my soul
When I think of my uncle's last words,
And my heart is like nothing so much as a bowl
Brimming over with quivering curds!

"I engage with the snark every night after dark
In a dreamy delirious fight;
I serve it with greens in those shadowy scenes,
And I use it for striking a light.

"But if ever I meet with a Boojum, that day
In a moment (of this I am sure)
I shall softly and suddenly vanish away,
And the notion I cannot endure.

"'You may seek it with thimbles, and seek it with care;
You may hunt it with forks and hope;
You may threaten its life with a railway share;
You may charm it with smiles and soap.'"

Etc., etc.

(Lewis Carroll.)

Rosalie's face was a delightful puzzle during the recital, and then as the tale unfolded through the medium of the queer vocabulary, her eyes twinkled, and at last her laughter joined with Dorothy's, as she clapped her hands at Lewis Carroll's amazing poem.

"And the frolic, Catharine? You promised to tell us about the frolic," said Dorothy.

"Here is Margaret with our candles," said Rosalie. "Tell us upstairs, Catharine," as each girl took a silver candlestick and went up to her room for the night. And Catharine's plan for a frolic must have been very jolly

indeed, for peals of laughter came from behind closed doors, and when the morning came the three girls were merry with some unexpressed excitement. Rosalie wrote notes and sent them to the "Maid of the Mist." Dorothy drew pictures madly on cardboard. Catharine drove to the village, and came home ladened with packages. The fog came in on piazza and lawn. The "Maid of the Mist" sent its hoarse call through the haze.

"We'll be up at three o'clock, girls! What's up, mystery?" called Dickie.

"Why sailor suits?" called Wolcott.

"Packs of cards, yes. Anything to eat?" said P. Mattocks.

Very wet, they arrived at three, and from the village another party in a buckboard.

"Something new at the Cove? What is hunting the snark?" said Hilda. "That is it, how do you hunt the snark? The invitation says —"

"'Come help us hunt the snark at three o'clock,'" said Dickie. "I've been to a peanut

hunt and an egg hunt, but hunting the snark is worse than chasing the sea serpent. Hello, Catharine, what are you?"

"Oh, I am the bellman," said Catharine, ringing a large bell.

"And I am the beaver," said Rosalie.

Catharine rang the bell to call the party into the big hall, where four tables were set for a round game of cards, and all fell wonderingly into the nearest seats, as Catharine explained:

"The snark is the queen of spades. There are two snarks to be driven into your opponents' hands, and all the hearts. Play as you would in hearts two hands, and I will ring the bell for those to change tables who lose."

Never did a poor little card queen seem so formidable as after she had been dubbed "The Snark." The unfortunate holder of the queen of spades tried by hook or crook to force his neighbor to take it, and wild were the peals of laughter when two

queen snarks fell to Dickie's share, with a quiver of hearts besides, so that when the score was counted he found more than forty against his name.

Then came Rosalie, the beaver, and distributed tiny baskets and a diminutive thimble, saying mystically, "You hunt him with thimbles, and hunt him with care."

Then the losing players changed to a lower table, and the chase began again, the queens of spades being as illusive as a Boojum until turning up at last with Hilda, who had vainly tried to dispose of them.

Then came Rosalie with small forks for the winners. "You hunt him with forks and with hope."

As each new implement for the chase arrived there was a merry scrabble and the jolliest laughter, and all wondered what would come next. The chase for the snarks was a feverish one, Dickie having them on his board more frequently than the others, while P. Mattocks seemed most successful in evading the unlucky card.

With the third round came Rosalie carrying a basket of very tiny squares of soap.

"We chase him with smiles and with soap," said she, awarding to each winner a sweet-scented trophy.

"Where are the railway shares?" asked Dickie.

"Coming with the snark," said Catharine mysteriously.

And when the game was at its wildest, a fantastic figure appeared in the door — Dorothy, with eyes and mouth effectively cocked to a breadth and length unusual, her figure enveloped in an indescribable garment suggestive of scales and tails, while pendant from a girdle hung cakes of Pears' soap, silver forks, paper smiles, and bogus railway shares, on the tip of each finger being a large brass thimble.

"Now we 'll be able to catch her if she is n't a Boojum," said Wolcott, and the picture snark was soon ensnared by a dozen girls and boys, who danced merrily around her to

Catharine's mad "Two-Step March" in the music room, while the maids transformed the card tables to supper tables, to which they soon returned, enthusiastic over Catharine's new game of "Hunting the Snark."

As the young people enjoyed the dainty supper, Mr. Courtenay and Dickie's father watched from the doorway.

"The summer is short. Let them make the most of it. There 'll be winter and work by and by," said Mr. Courtenay.

"The fog is clearing. We must set sail to-morrow. It has been a pleasant anchorage," said Mr. Lord. "The boys must go home. They are fine lads, each with an individuality quite apart. Dickie will turn to business, Wolcott to the law, and young Mattocks has a dream for foreign engineering study."

"It is well that they know what they wish to do before the college life. It will save them from wasting their time," said Mr. Courtenay.

"They can always do that. Our boys and girls have a talent for that. It 's a pity we have no German army," said Mr. Lord.

"Oh, no, never," said Mr. Courtenay; "you should be glad you have not. Do not make life too easy for them, and they will need no German army. These boys are all right; they have determination; they will do something," said Mr. Courtenay.

"They have been fortunate in having the friendship of these girls this year. It will keep them level-headed through their college life. I believe in it," said Mr. Lord.

A few minutes more of hearty good-byes, and they scattered once more.

The "Maid of the Mist" sailed in the morning.

CHAPTER XXII

THE END

THE beautiful banks of the Hudson were again resplendent with autumn foliage, and school was once more in running order at Riverdale, boys and girls having both settled down to a new year of work. Among the girls not one was more diligent than Catharine Rogers. There had also come in with this new year a new order of things at Miss Montgomery's which had been inaugurated by Hilda Huntingdon, who, never having forgotten the initiation of Rosalie Courtenay into the Order of Beauty and Fashion, nor forgiven herself her part in it, had during her vacation written letters to many of the girls, which had already borne fruit in the school life; for when many of the

girls came back, instead of the elaborate outfit which had been thought necessary before, they brought but two serge dresses and black aprons, and white muslin for evening.

"I never started off for school so comfortably since I was a little girl," said Hilda. "For weeks beforehand I have had to spend hours at the dressmaker's, and mamma has been tired and cross; so that you can imagine her relief when I told her we were going to adopt Rosalie's way of dressing for school. She was surprised and glad enough, and I fancy every girl's mother was as glad."

"I always told you that you missed half the fun spending so much time over your clothes," said Dorothy. "My mother said that she would send me to a convent if things had gone on this year as they did last, and that girl from Chicago with her twenty-five silk waists had come back; but, thank fortune, we have learned as much from Rosalie as we have taught her."

It was a year and a day since Catharine

had run away from school when her friend, Miss Mason, received the following letter:

DEAR MISS MASON, — Would you believe that I am again at Riverdale, and not thinking a bit about running away? I just love it, and it is all on account of my proxy, Rosalie Courtenay. You know how it happened? After I ran away, papa gave the rest of the school year to her, and she used to write me such jolly letters about the school, and she is such a dear herself, that I was wild to come back this year. But you would never know me nor any of the rest of us. It's a regular reformed school since Rosalie came. The girls decided to give up dressing so much, and we have all adopted a kind of uniform — serge dresses and black aprons. Just jolly to wipe your pens on! Just like what the school-girls in France and Germany wear. And then we don't have silk dresses even to dress up in; in the evening we wear white muslins or white mohair, and we never have to think at all about what we are going to wear, or feel bad if another girl looks a little better dressed. Now it seems awfully funny that in the beginning the girls were all going to make Rosalie over to their pattern, and they have all come around to her way of doing. Some of her ways seemed

awfully queer at first, especially getting up every time a teacher came into the room, and all that; but now the girls think it seems a lot nicer to be more polite to the teachers than we used to be, and altogether Rosalie has changed us more than we have changed her, and her French is just splendid, and she talks to me a lot, as I room with her. I forgot to say she is pupil teacher this year, and is coaching us in French plays. And then we are learning housekeeping beside, one of Rosalie's ideas; but the best of it is, she does n't think that she is doing a thing herself, but Miss Graham says that she is our guiding star. With all that quiet way of a foreign school, she has mixed some of the spicy independence of ours. It is a great mixture, and it would never have come about if you and your friend had not helped me out of that horrid scrape a year ago.

Your loving

CATHARINE.

To Catharine the year with Rosalie was indeed a happy one. Homesickness gave place to the enjoyment of the school routine, and although a too tame Catharine would not have been Catharine at all, her brilliant, impulsive audacity became gradually less

audacious, but not less generously impulsive, and the teachers who had despaired of her the year before delighted in her, and regretted that she would spend but one year in the school; for it was gradually unfolded that with the coming of another summer Mr. Courtenay would return to Europe, and that Catharine would go too, to study with Rosalie some of the lessons of the old world in exchange for the many in the new which Rosalie had learned by her side.

With both girls would go a dearly beloved chaperon, no longer the teacher Miss Graham, but as a new mother for Rosalie herself, — one who in the old world would cement the ties with the new, and perhaps again bring the little foreigner to the land of her forefathers, there to renew the friendships of two school years.

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